May

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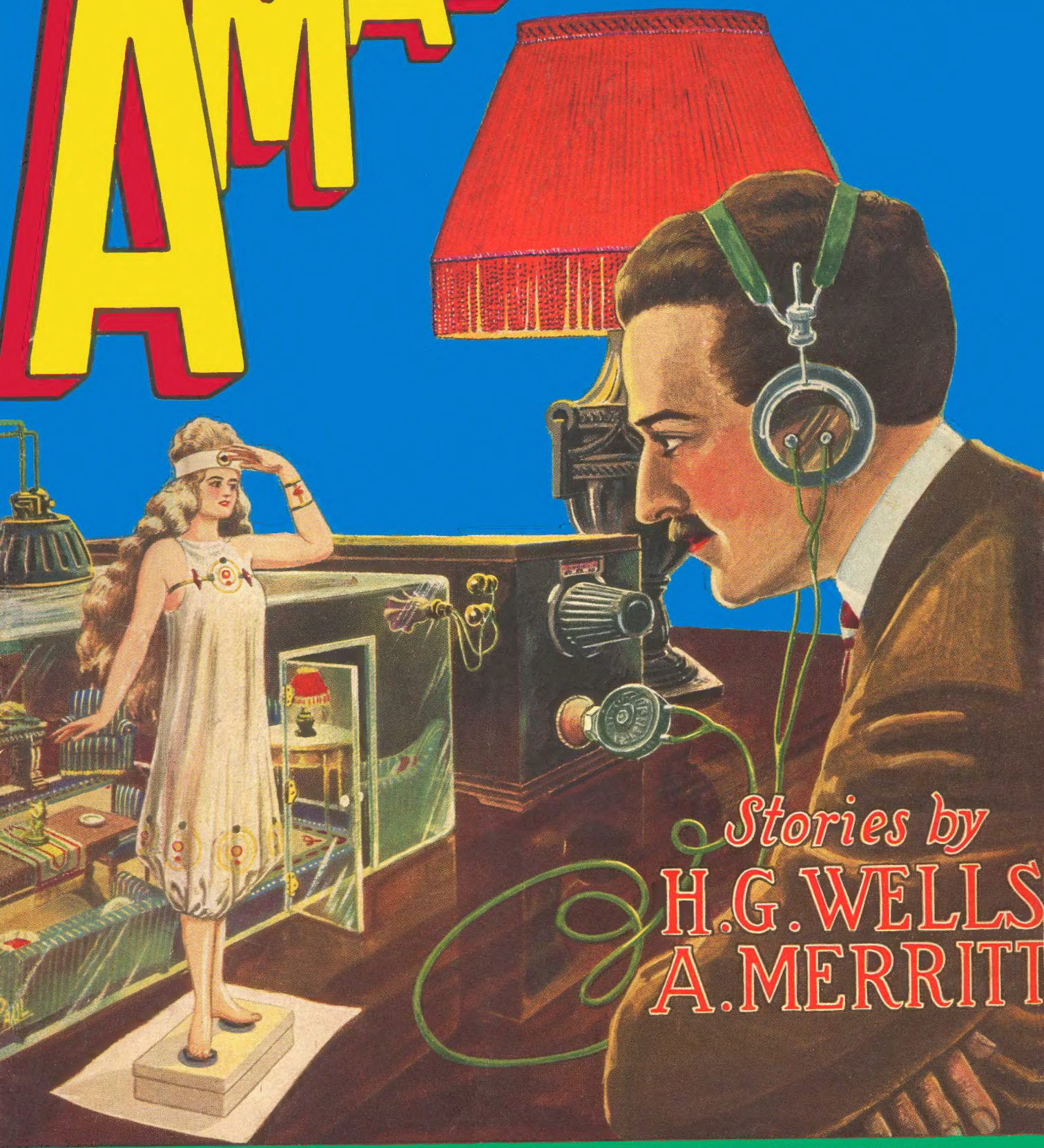
AMAZING STORIES

HUGO GERNSBACK
EDITOR



Stories by
H.G.WELLS
A.MERRITT

EXPERIMENTER PUBLISHING COMPANY, NEW YORK, PUBLISHERS OF
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JULES VERNE'S TOMBSTONE AT AMIENS
PORTRAYING HIS IMMORTALITY

AMAZING STORIES

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May, 1927

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Contents for May

The Moon Pool (A Serial in 3 parts) Part 1
By A. Merritt 110

The Man Who Died By Proxy
By Frank Gates 145

The Time Machine
By H. G. Wells 148

The Singing Weapon
By Bent Prout 180

The Man Who Was
By Walter Burch 188

The Star of Dead Love
By Will H. Gray 200

Our Cover

this month, presents a scene from "The Star of Dead Love," in which Dr. Joyce watches the beautiful being from Venus diminish in size sufficiently to enter the little cabinet containing miniature furniture; valves and regulators admit filtered and warmed air, and a tiny amplifying set, in which the sound collector is the trumpet of a columbine with its five spikes or nectaries, leading to five different transmitters.

In Our Next Issue:

THE MOON POOL, by A. Merritt. In this instalment, the Celtic mythology and the "Underworld" Queen's annihilation of the criminal by vibrations are only small examples of the fantastic incidents and unusual science that permeates the succeeding chapters of this absorbing scientification classic. The story continues with increasing interest.

THE FOUR-DIMENSIONAL ROLLER-PRESS, by Bob Olsen is a very clever fourth-dimensional story, telling in layman language, what the fourth dimension really is. Although we do not know enough about it yet to grasp the mathematics or mechanics of it, it seems logical to us that mathematically, there is such a thing as a fourth dimension. This is a well-told, plausible story and makes excellent reading.

THE LOST COMET, by Ronald M. Sherin, is an excellent story about a disintegrated comet, whose components have been lost from the view of the earth for many years, and which, according to the new cometary geometry invented by the scientist of the story, is due for a devasting visit.

THE SHADOW ON THE SPARK, by Edward S. Sears. To possess perfect health and a robust physique, does not mean that death from shock is impossible. On the other hand, if such a person dies, apparently from the effect of an operation for the amputation of a leg, some suspicion as to the real cause of his death is justifiable. Our new author weaves his science through this unusual murder story in a thoroughly ingenious manner.

SOLANDER'S RADIO TOMB, by Ellis Parker Butler. In his inimitable style, the famous author of "Pigs is Pigs" gives us the humorous angle of the radio-fan and radio. If you are planning to provide in your will, for the installation of a loud speaker in your private vault, it would be well to read this story first, for the intricacies of radio are great, and the unexpected occurs often.

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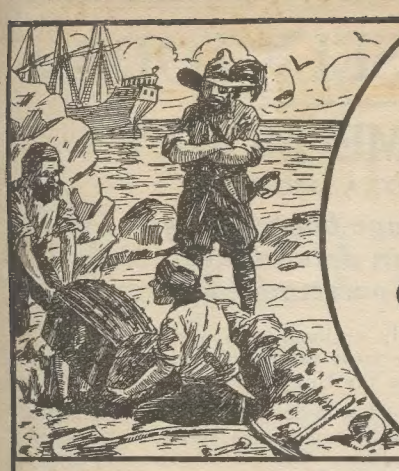

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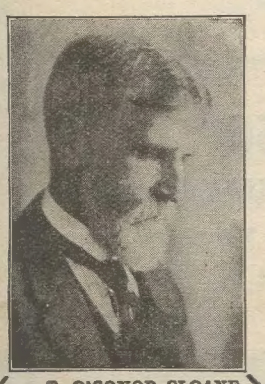

T. O'CONOR SLOANE, A.B., A.M., LL.D., Ph.D.

Noted Instructor, Lecturer and Author. Formerly Treasurer American Chemical Society and a practical chemist with many well known achievements to his credit. Not only has Dr. Sloane taught chemistry for years but he was for many years engaged in commercial chemistry work.

Do you remember how the tales of pirate gold used to fire your imagination and make you want to sail the uncharted seas in search of treasure and adventure? And then you would regret that such things were no longer done. But that is a mistake. They *are* done—today and everyday—not on desert islands, but in the chemical laboratories throughout your own country. Quietly, systematically, the chemist works. His work is difficult, but more adventurous than the blood-curdling deeds of the Spanish Main. Instead of meeting an early and violent death on some forgotten shore, he gathers wealth and honor through his invaluable contributions to humanity. Alfred Nobel, the Swedish chemist who invented dynamite, made so many millions that the income alone from his bequests provides five $40,000 prizes every year for the advancement of science and peace. C. M. Hall, the chemist who discovered how to manufacture aluminum made millions through this discovery. F. G. Cottrell, who devised a valuable process for recovering the waste from flue gases, James Gayley, who showed how to save enormous losses in steel manufacture, L. H. Baekeland, who invented Bakelite—these are only a few of the men to whom fortunes have come through their chemical achievements.

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I find your course excellent and your instruction, truthfully, the clearest and best assembled I have ever taken, and yours is the fifth one I've studied.—JAMES J. KELLY.

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I shall always recommend your school to my friends and let them know how simple your lessons are.—C. J. AMDAHL.

I am more than pleased. You dig right in from the start. I am going to get somewhere with this course. I am so glad that I found you.—A. A. CAMERON.

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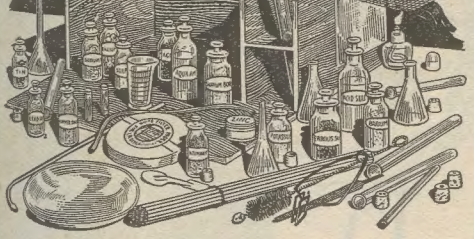
I received employment in the Consolidated Gas. Co. I appreciate very much the good service of the school when a recommendation was asked for.—JOS. DECKER.



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VOLUME 2

AMAZING STORIES

THE MAGAZINE OF SCIENTIFICTION

MAY, 1927
No. 2

HUGO GERNSBACK, *Editor*
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Editorial and General Offices: 230 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Extravagant Fiction Today - - - - - - - - Cold Fact Tomorrow

AMAZING CREATIONS

By HUGO GERNSBACK

"WHATEVER the human mind thinks, can be created." Thus runs a hackneyed phrase, much used in these days. Of course, one cannot expect every thought conceived in the human brain to represent a possibility, though a countless number of ideas thus conceived are perfectly possible of realization. The thought of the automobile preceded its actual accomplishment, just as the thought of the printing press, the phonograph, the telephone, and thousands of other marvellous things preceded the invention. Yet when we read some of the latter day scientifiction stories, we pause to wonder whether such things as are written of, can ever come to pass.

The editors of AMAZING STORIES, at least, are trying their best to keep from this magazine stories that belong rather in the domain of fairy tales than of scientifiction. The editorial board of AMAZING STORIES makes this fine distinction: a story, to be true scientifiction, should have a scientific basis of plausibility, so that while it may not seem possible to perform the miracle this year or next, it may conceivably come about 500, 5,000 or 500,000 years hence.

Many stories which are excellent from a literary standpoint show poor science. These stories are invariably rejected by AMAZING STORIES, as they are usually of the fairyland type. Recently an excellent story was submitted, wherein the scientist had conquered distance by means of a ray. It was possible to bring a dwelling many miles away to your doorstep, which, on the face of it, seems impossible of accomplishment. We may conceivably invent a ray that might annihilate distance, which, translated into English, would mean television, and I can think in this sense of transporting St. Peter's Cathedral or the Eiffel Tower right into my study. But it seems impossible to bring these same objects physically into my room for many obvious reasons.

In the story by Mr. A. Merritt in the current issue, the author has hit upon a most extraordinary invention, which, as you will find, he calls "The Shining One." Here is really a new thought, because "The Shining One" is neither a human being, nor a god, nor is it electricity, or light, yet it is possessed of some intelligence. Very strange and fascinating, and most exciting. At first thought you might feel that a story of this kind, while highly interesting, really should be classed with fairy tales. You will, however, soon discover your error, because, after all, the thing is not really impossible. While "The Shining One" may never become a reality, it is conceivable that such an entity might come into existence at some future time, when we know more about science in general and when we know more about rays and radio-activity.

It is quite conceivable that "The Shining One" might merely have been the instrument of some human being, although the author naturally remains silent about this. As I said before, the thing is not an impossibility.

We know so little about what is going on all around us that imaginative authors have frequently based their stories on the theme of our ignorance. Our senses are most incomplete and there are many things that we cannot perceive at all. We don't even know how many of the insects communicate with each other and until we know that, we must not jump to any rash conclusions about their life and intellect. The thought that intelligence dwells only in an animal or an insect seems ludicrous. What guarantee have we that reasoning and intelligence could not be well found in entirely different surroundings? It is not inconceivable that an intelligence could be in a gas, in a liquid, or even in a solid. All this probably sounds foolish to most of us, but, after all, our intelligence is really rather feeble and many things can not be comprehended or understood by us at all. This, for instance, is the case with the comparatively well-known thing which we term "infinity." The endlessness of space and the thought that nothing can have had a beginning, if you stop to think about it for five minutes, will give you a pretty bad headache, and some people have actually gone mad in the contemplation of these problems. Reason tells us that everything must have had a beginning, and at the same time we know that it had not. We know that our whole physical universe could not have come out of nothing, and yet we know that it probably did. All of this goes to show that our much-vaunted intelligence does not really amount to so very much, and perhaps, after all, is not even intelligence to some superior beings.

Mr. Hugo Gernsback speaks every Monday at 9 P. M. from WRNY on various scientific and radio subjects.

The MOON POOL

By A. Merritt

Author of "The People of the Pit."

"Upon the pool streamed seven shafts of radiance. They poured down upon the blue eye like cylindrical torrents. . . . And then out from the Inexplicable, hovering over the pool, swept a shining swirl. It caught me above the heart; wrapped itself around me. . . . It was as though the icy soul of evil and the fiery soul of good had stepped together within me."

CHAPTER I

The Thing on the Moon Path

FOR two months I had been on the d'Entrecasteaux Islands gathering data for the concluding chapters of my book upon the flora of the volcanic islands of the South Pacific. The day before I had reached Port Moresby and had seen my specimens safely stored on board the *Southern Queen*. As I sat on the upper deck I thought, with homesick mind, of the long leagues between me and Melbourne, and the longer ones between Melbourne and New York.

It was one of Papua's yellow mornings when she shows herself in her sombrest, most baleful mood. The sky was smouldering ochre. Over the island brooded a spirit sullen, alien, implacable, filled with the threat of latent, malefic forces waiting to be unleashed. It seemed an emanation out of the untamed, sinister heart of Papua herself—sinister even when she smiles. And now and then, on the wind, came a breath from virgin jungles, laden with unfamiliar odors, mysterious and menacing.

It is on such mornings that Papua whispers to you of her immemorial ancientness and of her power. And, as every white man must, I fought against her spell. While I struggled I saw a tall figure striding down the pier; a Kapa-Kapa boy followed swinging a new valise. There was something familiar about the tall man. As he reached the gangplank he looked up straight into my eyes, stared for a moment, then waved his hand.

And now I knew him. It was Dr. David Throckmartin—"Throck" he was to me always, one of my oldest friends and, as well, a mind of the first water, whose power and achievements were for me a constant inspiration as they were, I know, for scores other.

Coincident with my recognition came a shock of surprise, definitely — unpleasant. It was Throckmartin—but about him was something disturbingly unlike the man I had known for so long and to whom and to whose little party I had bidden farewell less than a month before I myself had sailed for these seas. Only a few weeks before he had married Edith, the daughter of Professor William Frazier, younger by at least a decade than he, but at one with him in his ideals and as much in love, if it were possible, as Throckmartin. By virtue of her father's training a wonderful assistant, by virtue of her own sweet, sound heart a—I use the word in its olden sense—lover. With his equally youthful associate, Dr. Charles Stanton, and a Swedish woman, Thora Halversen, who had been Edith Throckmartin's nurse from babyhood, they had set forth for the Nan-Matal, that extraordinary group of island ruins clustered along the eastern shore of Ponape in the Carolines.

I knew that he had planned to spend at least a year among these ruins, not only of Ponape but of Lele—twin centres of a colossal riddle of humanity, a weird flower of civilization that blossomed ages before the seeds of Egypt were sown; of whose arts we know little enough and of whose science nothing. He had carried with him unusually complete equipment for the work he had expected to do and which, he hoped, would be his monument.

What then had brought Throckmartin to Port Moresby, and what was that change I had sensed in him?

Hurrying down to the lower deck I found him with the purser. As I spoke he turned, thrust out to me an eager hand—and then I saw what was that difference that had so moved me. He knew, of course, by my silence and involuntary shrinking the shock my closer look had given me. His eyes filled; he turned brusquely from the purser, hesitated—then hurried off to his stateroom.

"'E looks rather queer—eh?" said the purser. "Know 'im well, sir? Seems to 'ave given you quite a start."

I made some reply and went slowly up to my chair. There I sat, composed my mind and tried to define what it was that had shaken me so. Now it came to me. The old Throckmartin was, on the eve of his venture, just turned forty, lithe, erect, muscular; his controlling expression one of enthusiasm, of intellectual keenness, of—what shall I say—expectant search. His always questioning brain had stamped its vigor upon his face.

But the Throckmartin I had seen below was one who had borne some searing shock of mingled rapture and horror; some soul cataclysm that in its climax had remoulded, deep from within, his face, setting on it a seal of wedded ecstasy and despair; as though indeed these two had come to him hand in hand, taken possession of him and departing, left behind, ineradicably, their linked shadows!

Yes—it was that which appalled. For how could rapture and h o r r o r, Heaven and Hell mix, clasp hands—kiss?

Yet these were what in closest embrace lay on Throckmartin's face!

DEEP in thought, subconsciously with relief, I watched the shore line sink behind; welcomed the touch of the wind of the free seas. I had hoped, and within the hope was an inexplicable shrinking that I would meet Throckmartin at lunch. He did not come down, and I was sensible of deliverance within my disappointment. All that afternoon I lounged about uneasily but still he kept to his cabin—and within me was no strength to summon him. Nor did he appear at dinner.

Dusk and night fell swiftly. I was warm and went back to my deck-chair. The *Southern Queen*

HEEDING the request of hundreds of readers, we have made arrangements for the publication of "The Moon Pool." This classic is, without a doubt, one of the outstanding works of scientifiction today. For sheer imagination, astounding situations, extraordinary science, which has no parallel in all scientifiction, this story easily ranks first. When Mr. Merritt wrote this story he had to invent an entirely new and incredibly amazing science, which is neither electricity nor light, nor anything else you have ever thought or dreamt of. But that is not the only merit of this great story. There is plenty of action and every chapter is packed full of astounding adventure that sustains your breathless interest throughout. "The Moon Pool," will without question, remain one of the greatest scientifiction classics of all time.

was rolling to a disquieting swell and I had the place to myself.

Over the heavens was a canopy of cloud, glowing faintly and testifying to the moon riding behind it. There was much phosphorescence. Fitfully before the ship and at her sides arose those strange little swirls of mist that swirl up from the Southern Ocean like breath of sea monsters, whirl for an instant and disappear.

Suddenly the deck door opened and through it came Throckmartin. He paused uncertainly, looked up at the sky with a curiously eager, intent gaze, hesitated, then closed the door behind him.

"Throck," I called. "Come! It's Goodwin."

He made his way to me.

"Throck," I said, wasting no time in preliminaries. "What's wrong? Can I help you?"

I felt his body grow tense.

"I'm going to Melbourne, Goodwin," he answered. "I need a few things—need them urgently. And more men—white men——"

He stopped abruptly; rose from his chair, gazed intently toward the north. I followed his gaze. Far, far away the moon had broken through the clouds. Almost on the horizon, you could see the faint luminescence of it upon the smooth sea. The distant patch of light quivered and shook. The clouds thickened again and it was gone. The ship raced on southward, swiftly.

Throckmartin dropped into his chair. He lighted a cigarette with a hand that trembled; then turned to me with abrupt resolution.

"Goodwin," he said, "I do need help. If ever man needed it, I do. Goodwin—can you imagine yourself in another world, alien, unfamiliar, a world of terror, whose unknown joy is its greatest terror of all; you alone there, a stranger! As such a man would need help, so I need——"

He paused abruptly and arose; the cigarette dropped from his fingers. The moon had again broken through the clouds, and this time much nearer. Not a mile away was the patch of light that it threw upon the waves. Back of it, to the rim of the sea was a lane of moonlight; a gigantic gleaming serpent raving over the edge of the world straight and surely toward the ship.

Throckmartin stiffened to it as a pointer does to a hidden covey. To me from him pulsed a thrill of horror—but horror tinged with an unfamiliar, an infernal joy. It came to me and passed away—leaving me trembling with its shock of bitter sweet.

He bent forward, all his soul in his eyes. The moon path swept closer, closer still. It was now less than half a mile away. From it the ship fled—almost as though pursued. Down upon it, swift and straight, a radiant torrent cleaving the waves, raced the moon stream.

"Good God!" breathed Throckmartin, and if ever the words were a prayer and an innovation, they were.

And then, for the first time—I saw—*it!*

The moon path stretched to the horizon and was bordered by darkness. It was as though the clouds above had been parted to form a lane—drawn aside like curtains or as the waters of the Red Sea were held back to let the hosts of Israel through. On each side of the stream was the black shadow cast by the folds of the high canopies. And straight as a road between the opaque walls gleamed, shimmered and danced the shining, racing rapids of the moonlight.

Far, it seemed immeasurably far, along this stream of silver fire I sensed, rather than saw, something coming. It drew first into sight as a deeper glow within the light. On and on it swept toward us—an opalescent mistiness that sped with the suggestion of some winged creature in arrowed flight. Dimly there crept into my mind memory of the Dyak legend of the winged messenger of Buddha—the Akla bird whose feathers are woven of the moon rays, whose heart is a living opal, whose wings in flight echo the crystal clear music of the white stars—but whose beak is of frozen flame and shreds the souls of unbelievers.

Closer it drew and now there came to me sweet, insistent tinklings—like pizzicati on violins of glass; crystal clear; diamonds melting into sounds!

Now the Thing was close to the end of the white path; close up to the barrier of darkness still between the ship and the sparkling head of the moon stream. Now it beat up against that barrier as a bird against the bars of its cage. It whirled with shimmering plumes, with swirls of lacy light, with spirals of living vapor. It held within it odd, unfamiliar gleams as of shifting mother-of-pearl. Coruscations and glittering atoms drifted through it as though it drew them from the rays that bathed it.

Nearer and nearer it came, borne on the sparkling waves, and ever thinner shrank the protecting wall of shadow between it and us. Within the mistiness was a core, a nucleus of intenser light—veined, opaline, effulgent, intensely alive. And above it, tangled in the plumes and spirals that throbbed and whirled were seven glowing lights.

Through all the incessant but strangely ordered movement of the—*thing*—these lights held firm and steady. They were seven—like seven little moons. One was of a pearly pink, one of delicate nacreous blue, one of lambent saffron, one of the emerald you see in the shallow waters of tropic isles; a deathly white; a ghostly amethyst; and one of the silver that is seen only when the flying fish leap beneath the moon.

THE tinkling music was louder still. It pierced the ears with a shower of tiny lances; it made the heart beat jubilantly—and checked it dolorously. It closed the throat with a throb of rapture and gripped it tight with the hand of infinite sorrow!

Came to me now a murmuring cry, stilling the crystal notes. It was articulate—but as though from something utterly foreign to this world. The ear took the cry and translated with conscious labor into the sounds of earth. And even as it compassed, the brain shrank from it irresistibly, and simultaneously it seemed reached toward it with irresistible eagerness.

Throckmartin strode toward the front of the deck, straight toward the vision, now but a few yards away from the stern. His face had lost all human semblance. Utter agony and utter ecstasy

—there they were side by side, not resisting each other; unholy inhuman companions blending into a look that none of God's creatures should wear—and deep, deep as his soul! A devil and a God dwelling harmoniously side by side! So must Satan, newly fallen, still divine, seeing heaven and contemplating hell, have appeared.

And then—swiftly the moon path faded! The clouds swept over the sky as though a hand had drawn them together. Up from the south came a roaring squall. As the moon vanished what I had seen vanished with it—blotted out as an image on a magic lantern; the tinkling ceased abruptly—leaving a silence like that which follows an abrupt thunder clap. There was nothing about us but silence and blackness!

Through me passed a trembling as one who has stood on the very verge of the gulf wherein the men of the Louisades say lurks the fisher of the souls of men, and has been plucked back by sheerest chance.

Throckmartin passed an arm around me.

"It is as I thought," he said. In his voice was a new note; the calm certainty that has swept aside a waiting terror of the unknown. "Now I know! Come with me to my cabin, old friend. For now that you too have seen I can tell you"—he hesitated—"what it was you saw," he ended.

As we passed through the door we met the ship's first officer. Throckmartin composed his face into at least a semblance of normality.

"Going to have much of a storm?" he asked.

"Yes," said the mate. "Probably all the way to Melbourne."

Throckmartin straightened as though with a new thought. He gripped the officer's sleeve eagerly.

"You mean at least cloudy weather—for"—he hesitated—"for the next three nights, say?"

"And for three more," replied the mate.

"Thank God!" cried Throckmartin, and I think I never heard such relief and hope as was in his voice.

The sailor stood amazed. "Thank God?" he repeated. "Thank—what d'ye mean?"

But Throckmartin was moving onward to his cabin. I started to follow. The first officer stopped me.

"Your friend," he said, "is he ill?"

"The sea!" I answered hurriedly. "He's not used to it. I am going to look after him."

Doubt and disbelief were plain in the seaman's eyes but I hurried on. For I knew now that Throckmartin was ill indeed—but with a sickness no ship's doctor nor any other could heal.

CHAPTER II

"Dead! All Dead!"

HE was sitting, face in hands, on the side of his berth as I entered. He had taken off his coat.

"Throck," I cried. "What was it? What are you flying from, man? Where is your wife—and Stanton?"

"Dead!" he replied monotonously. "Dead! All dead!" Then as I recoiled from him—"All dead. Edith, Stanton, Thora—dead—or worse. And Edith in the Moon Pool—with them—drawn by what you saw on the moon path—that has put its brand upon me—and follows me!"

He ripped open his shirt.

"Look at this," he said. Around his chest, above his heart, the skin was white as pearl. This whiteness was sharply defined against the healthy tint of the body. It circled him with an even cincture about two inches wide.

"Burn it!" he said, and offered me his cigarette. I drew back. He gestured—peremptorily. I pressed the glowing end of the cigarette into the ribbon of white flesh. He did not flinch nor was there odor of burning nor, as I drew the little cylinder away, was there any mark upon the whiteness.

"Feel it!" he commanded again. I placed my fingers upon the band. It was cold—like frozen marble.

He drew his shirt about him.

"Two things you have seen," he said. "*It*—and its mark. Seeing, you must believe my story. Goodwin, I tell you again that my wife is dead—or worse—I do not know; the prey of—what you saw; so, too, is Stanton; so Thora. How——"

Tears rolled down the seared face.

"Why did God let it conquer us? Why did He let it take my Edith?" he cried in utter bitterness. "Are there things stronger than God, do you think, Walter?"

I hesitated.

"Are there? Are there?" His wild eyes searched me.

"I do not know just how you define God," I managed at last through my astonishment to make answer. "If you mean the will to know, working through science——"

He waved me aside impatiently.

"Science," he said. "What is our science against—that? Or against the science of whatever devils that made it—or made the way for it to enter this world of ours?"

With an effort he regained control.

"Goodwin," he said, "do you know at all of the ruins on the Carolines; the cyclopean, megolithic cities and harbors of Ponape and Lele, of Kusaie, of Ruk and Hogolu, and a score of other islets there? Particularly, do you know of the Nan-Matal and the Metalanim?"

"Of the Metalanim I have heard and seen photographs," I said. "They call it, don't they, the Lost Venice of the Pacific?"

"Look at this map," said Throckmartin. "That," he went on, "is Christian's chart of Metalanim harbor and the Nan-Matal. Do you see the rectangles marked Nan-Tauach?"

"Yes," I said.

"There," he said, "under those walls is the Moon Pool and the seven gleaming lights that raise the Dweller in the Pool, and the altar and shrine of the Dweller. And there in the Moon Pool with it lie Edith and Stanton and Thora."

"The Dweller in the Moon Pool?" I repeated half-incredulously.

"The Thing you saw," said Throckmartin solemnly.

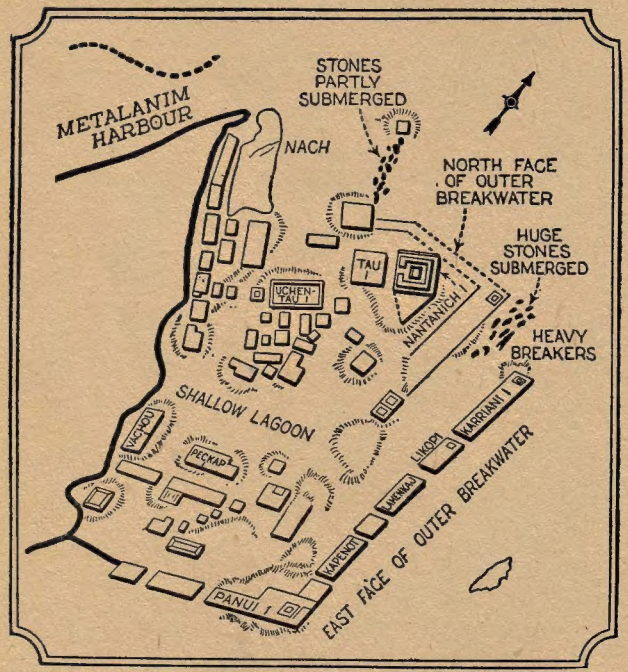
A solid sheet of rain swept the ports, and the *Southern Queen* began to roll on the rising swells. Throckmartin drew another deep breath of relief, and drawing aside a curtain peered out into the night. Its blackness seemed to reassure him. At any rate, when he sat again he was entirely calm.

"There are no more wonderful ruins in the world," he began almost casually. "They take in some fifty islets and cover with their intersecting canals and lagoons about twelve square miles. Who built them? None knows. When were they built? Ages before the memory of present man, that is sure. Ten thousand, twenty thousand, a hundred thousand years ago—the last more likely.

"All these islets, Walter, are squared, and their shores are frowning sea-walls of gigantic basalt blocks hewn and put in place by the hands of ancient man. Each inner water-front is faced with a terrace of those basalt blocks which stand out six feet above the shallow canals that meander between them. On the islets behind these walls are time-shattered fortresses, palaces, terraces, pyramids; immense courtyards strewn with ruins—and all so old that they seem to wither the eyes of those who look on them.

"There has been a great subsidence. You can stand out of Metalanim harbor for three miles and look down upon the tops of similar monolithic structures and walls twenty feet below you in the water.

"And all about, strung on their canals, are the bulwarked islets with their enigmatic walls peering through the dense growths of mangroves—dead, deserted for incalculable ages; shunned by those who live near.



A copy of the map of the islets of the Nan-Matal, which Dr. Throckmartin gave Dr. Goodwin. It in its turn is a copy of the official sketch plan by F. W. Christian, the first explorer to map the Caroline Island's mysterious maze.

"You as a botanist are familiar with the evidence that a vast shadowy continent existed in the Pacific—a continent that was not rent asunder by volcanic forces as was that legendary one of Atlantis in the Eastern Ocean.[1] My work in Java, in Papua, and in the Ladrones had set my mind upon this Pacific lost land. Just as the Azores are believed to be the last high peaks of Atlantis, so hints came to me steadily that Ponape and Lele and their basalt bulwarked islets were the last points of the slowly sunken western land clinging still to the sunlight, and had been the last refuge and sacred places of the rulers of that race which had lost their immemorial home under the rising waters of the Pacific.[1]

"I believed that under these ruins I might find the evidence that I sought.

"My—my wife and I had talked before we were married of making this our great work. After the honeymoon we prepared for the expedition. Stanton was as enthusiastic as ourselves. We sailed, as you know, last May for fulfilment of my dreams.

"At Ponape we selected, not without difficulty, workmen to help us—diggers. I had to make extraordinary inducements before I could get together my force. Their beliefs are gloomy, these Ponapeans. They people their swamps, their forests, their mountains, and shores, with malignant spirits —*ani* they call them. And they are afraid—bitterly afraid of the isles of ruins and what they think the ruins hide. I do not wonder—now!

"When they were told where they were to go, and how long we expected to stay, they murmured. Those who, at last, were tempted made what I thought then merely a superstitious proviso that they were to be allowed to go away on the three nights of the full moon. Would to God we had heeded them and gone too!"

"We passed into Metalanim harbor. Off to our left—a mile away arose a massive quadrangle. Its walls were all of forty feet high and hundreds of feet on each side. As we drew by our natives grew very silent; watched it furtively, fearfully. I knew it for the ruins that are called Nan-Tauach, the 'place of frowning walls.' And at the silence of my men I recalled what Christian had written of this place; of how he had come upon its 'ancient platforms and tetragonal enclosures of stonework; its wonder of tortuous alleyways and labyrinth of shallow canals; grim masses of stonework peering out from behind verdant screens; cyclopean barricades,' and of how, when he had turned 'into its ghostly shadows, straightway the merriment of guides was hushed and conversation died down to whispers.'"

He was silent for a little time.

"Of course I wanted to pitch our camp there," he went on again quietly, "but I soon gave up that idea. The natives were panic-stricken—threatened to turn back. 'No,' they said, 'too great *ani* there. We go to any other place—but not there.'

"We finally picked for our base the islet called Uschen-Tau. It was close to the isle of desire, but far enough away from it to satisfy our men. There was an excellent camping-place and a spring of fresh water. We pitched our tents, and in a couple of days the work was in full swing."

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[1]For more detailed observations on these points refer to G. Volkens, *Uber die Karolinen Insel Yap*, in Verhandlungen Gesellschaft Erdkunde Berlin, xxvii (1901); J. S. Kubary, *Ethonographische Beiträge zur Kentniss des Karolinen Archipel* (Leiden, 1889-1892): De Abrade *Historia del Conflicto de las Carolinas, etc.* (Madrid, 1886). W. T. G.

CHAPTER III

The Moon Rock

"I DO not intend to tell you now," Throckmartin continued, "the results of the next two weeks, nor of what we found. Later—if I am allowed, I will lay all that before you. It is sufficient to say that at the end of those two weeks I had found confirmation for many of my theories.

"The place, for all its decay and desolation, had not infected us with any touch of morbidity—that is not Edith, Stanton, or myself. But Thora was very unhappy. She was a Swede, as you know, and in her blood ran the beliefs and superstitions of the Northland—some of them so strangely akin to those of this far southern land; beliefs in spirits of mountain and forest and water werewolves and beings malign. From the first she showed a curious sensitivity to what, I suppose, may be called the 'influences' of the place. She said it 'smelled' of ghosts and warlocks.

"I laughed at her then——

"Two weeks slipped by, and at their end the spokesman for our natives came to us. The next night was the full of the moon, he said. He reminded me of my promise. They would go back to their village in the morning; they would return after the third night, when the moon had begun to wane. They left us sundry charms for our 'protection,' and solemnly cautioned us to keep as far away as possible from Nan-Tauach during their absence. Half-exasperated, half-amused I watched them go.

"No work could be done without them, of course, so we decided to spend the days of their absence junketing about the southern islets of the group. We marked down several spots for subsequent exploration, and on the morning of the third day set forth along the east face of the breakwater for our camp on Uschen-Tau, planning to have everything in readiness for the return of our men the next day.

"We landed just before dusk, tired and ready for our cots. It was only a little after ten o'clock that Edith awakened me.

"'Listen!' she said. 'Lean over with your ear close to the ground!'

"I did so, and seemed to hear, far, far below, as though coming up from great distances, a faint chanting. It gathered strength, died down, ended; began, gathered volume, faded away into silence.

"'It's the waves rolling on rocks somewhere,' I said. 'We're probably over some ledge of rock that carries the sound.'

"'It's the first time I've heard it,' replied my wife doubtfully. We listened again. Then through the dim rhythms, deep beneath us, another sound came. It drifted across the lagoon that lay between us and Nan-Tauach in little tinkling waves. It was music—of a sort; I won't describe the strange effect it had upon me. You've felt it——"

"You mean on the deck?" I asked. Throckmartin nodded.

"I went to the flap of the tent," he continued, "and peered out. As I did so Stanton lifted his flap and walked out into the moonlight, looking over to the other islet and listening. I called to him.

"'That's the queerest sound!' he said. He listened again. 'Crystalline! Like little notes of translucent glass. Like the bells of crystal on the sistrums of Isis at Dendarah Temple,' he added half-dreamily. We gazed intently at the island. Suddenly, on the sea-wall, moving slowly, rhythmically, we saw a little group of lights. Stanton laughed.

"'The beggars!' he exclaimed. 'That's why they wanted to get away, is it? Don't you see, Dave, it's some sort of festival—rites of some kind that they hold during the full moon. That's why they were so eager to have us *keep* away, too!'

"The explanation seemed good. I felt a curious sense of relief, although I had not been sensible of any oppression.

"'Let's slip over,' suggested Stanton—but I would not.

"'They're a difficult lot as it is,' I said. 'If we break into one of their religious ceremonies they'll probably never forgive us. Let's keep out of any family party where we haven't been invited.'

"'That's so,' agreed Stanton.

"The strange tinkling rose and fell, rose and fell——

"'There's something—something very unsettling about it,' said Edith at last soberly. 'I wonder what they make those sounds with. They frighten me half to death, and, at the same time, they make me feel as though some enormous rapture were just around the corner.'

"'It's devilish uncanny!' broke in Stanton.

"AND as he spoke the flap of Thora's tent was raised and out into the moonlight strode the old Swede. She was the great Norse type—tall, deep-breasted, moulded on the old Viking lines. Her sixty years had slipped from her. She looked like some ancient priestess of Odin.

She stood there, her eyes wide, brilliant, staring. She thrust her head forward toward Nan-Tauach, regarding the moving lights; she listened. Suddenly she raised her arms and made a curious gesture to the moon. It was—an archaic—movement; she seemed to drag it from remote antiquity—yet in it was a strange suggestion of power. Twice she repeated this gesture and—the tinklings died away! She turned to us.

"'Go!' she said, and her voice seemed to come from far distances. 'Go from here—and quickly! Go while you may. It has called—' She pointed to the islet. It knows you are here. It waits!' she wailed. 'It beckons—the—the——'

"She fell at Edith's feet, and over the lagoon came again the tinklings, now with a quicker note of jubilance—almost of triumph.

"We watched beside her throughout the night. The sounds from Nan-Tauach continued until about an hour before moon-set. In the morning Thora awoke, none the worse, apparently. She had had bad dreams, she said. She could not remember what they were—except that they had warned her of danger. She was oddly sullen, and throughout the morning her gaze returned again and again half-fascinatedly, half-wonderingly to the neighboring isle.

"That afternoon the natives returned. And that

night on Nan-Tauach the silence was unbroken and there were no lights or sign of life.

"You will understand, Goodwin, how the occurrences I have related would excite the scientific curiosity. We rejected immediately, of course, any explanation admitting the supernatural.

"Our—symptoms let me call them—could all very easily be accounted for. It is unquestionable that the vibrations created by certain musical instruments have definite and sometimes extraordinary effect upon the nervous system. We accepted this as the explanation of the reactions we had experienced, hearing the unfamiliar sounds. Thora's nervousness, her superstitious apprehensions, had wrought her up to a condition of semi-somnambulistic hysteria. Science could readily explain her part in the night's scene.

"We came to the conclusion that there must be a passageway betwen Ponape and Nan-Tauach known to the natives—and used by them during their rites. We decided that on the next departure of our laborers we would set forth immediately to Nan-Tauach. We would investigate during the day, and at evening my wife and Thora would go back to camp, leaving Stanton and me to spend the night on the island, observing from some safe hiding-place what might occur.

"The moon waned; appeared crescent in the west; waxed slowly toward the full. Before the men left us they literally prayed us to accompany them. Their importunities only made us more eager to see what it was that, we were now convinced, they wanted to conceal from us. At least that was true of Stanton and myself. It was not true of Edith. She was thoughtful, abstracted—reluctant.

"When the men were out of sight around the turn of the harbor, we took our boat and made straight for Nan-Tauach. Soon its mighty sea-wall towered above us. We passed through the water-gate with its gigantic hewn prisms of basalt and landed beside a half-submerged pier. In front of us stretched a series of giant steps leading into a vast court strewn with fragments of fallen pillars. In the centre of the court, beyond the shattered pillars, rose another terrace of basalt blocks, concealing, I knew, still another enclosure.

"And now, Walter, for the better understanding of what follows—and—and—" he hesitated. "Should you decide later to return with me or, if I am taken, to—to—follow us—listen carefully to my description of this place: Nan-Tauach is literally three rectangles. The first rectangle is the sea-wall, built up of monoliths—hewn and squared, twenty feet wide at the top. To get to the gateway in the sea-wall you pass along the canal marked on the map between Nan-Tauach and the islet named Tau. The entrance to the canal is hidden by dense thickets of mangroves; once through these the way is clear. The steps lead up from the landing of the sea-gate through the entrance to the courtyard.

"This courtyard is surrounded by another basalt wall, rectangular, following with mathematical exactness the march of the outer barricades. The sea-wall is from thirty to forty feet high—originally it must have been much higher, but there has been subsidence in parts. The wall of the first enclosure is fifteen feet across the top and its height varies from twenty to fifty feet—here, too, the gradual sinking of the land has caused portions of it to fall.

"Within this courtyard is the second enclosure. Its terrace, of the same basalt as the outer walls, is about twenty feet high. Entrance is gained to it by many breaches which time has made in its stonework. This is the inner court, the heart of Nan-Tauach! There lies the great central vault with which is associated the one name of living being that has come to us out of the mists of the past. The natives say it was the treasure-house of Chau-te-leur, a mighty king who reigned long 'before their fathers.' As Chau is the ancient Ponapean word both for sun and king, the name means, without doubt, 'place of the sun king.' It is a memory of a dynastic name of the race that ruled the Pacific continent, now vanished—just as the rulers of ancient Crete took the name of Minos and the rulers of Egypt the name of Pharaoh.

"And opposite this place of the sun king is the moon rock that hides the Moon Pool.

"IT was Stanton who discovered the moon rock. We had been inspecting the inner courtyard; Edith and Thora were getting together our lunch. I came out of the vault of Chau-te-leur to find Stanton before a part of the terrace studying it wonderingly.

"'What do you make of this?' he asked me as I came up. He pointed to the wall. I followed his finger and saw a slab of stone about fifteen feet high and ten wide. At first all I noticed was the exquisite nicety with which its edges joined the blocks about it. Then I realized that its color was subtly different—tinged with grey and of a smooth, peculiar—deadness.

"'Looks more like calcite than basalt,' I said. I touched it and withdrew my hand quickly, for at the contact every nerve in my arm tingled as though a shock of frozen electricity had passed through it. It was not cold as we know cold. It was a chill force—the phrase I have used—frozen electricity—describes it better than anything else. Stanton looked at me oddly.

"'So you felt it, too,' he said. 'I was wondering whether I was developing hallucinations like Thora. Notice, by the way, that the blocks beside it are quite warm beneath the sun.'

"We examined the slab eagerly. Its edges were cut as though by an engraver of jewels. They fitted against the neighboring blocks in almost a hair-line. Its base was slightly curved, and fitted as closely as top and sides upon the huge stones on which it rested. And then we noted that these stones had been hollowed to follow the line of the grey stone's foot. There was a semicircular depression running from one side of the slab to the other. It was as though the grey rock stood in the centre of a shallow cup—revealing half, covering half. Something about this hollow attracted me. I reached down and felt it. Goodwin, although the balance of the stones that formed it, like all the stones of the courtyard, were rough and age-worn—this was as smooth, as even surfaced as though it had just left the hands of the polisher.

"'It's a door!' exclaimed Stanton. 'It swings around in that little cup. That's what makes the hollow so smooth.'

"'Maybe you're right,' I replied. 'But how the devil can we open it?'

"We went over the slab again—pressing upon its edges, thrusting against its sides. During one of those efforts I happened to look up—and cried out. A foot above and on each side of the corner of the grey rock's lintel was a slight convexity, visible only from the angle at which my gaze struck it.

"We carried with us a small scaling-ladder, and up this I went. The bosses were apparently nothing more than chiseled curvatures in the stone. I laid my hand on the one I was examining, and drew it back sharply. In my palm, at the base of my thumb, I had felt the same shock that I had in touching the slab below. I put my hand back. The impression came from a spot not more than an inch wide. I went carefully over the entire convexity, and six times more the chill ran through my arm. There were seven circles an inch wide in the curved place, each of which communicated the precise sensation I have described. The convexity on the opposite side of the slab gave exactly the same results. But no amount of touching or of pressing these spots singly or in any combination gave the slightest promise of motion to the slab itself.

"'And yet—they're what open it,' said Stanton positively.

"'Why do you say that?' I asked.

"'I—don't know,' he answered hesitatingly. 'But something tells me so. Throck,' he went on half earnestly, half laughingly, 'the purely scientific part of me is fighting the purely human part of me. The scientific part is urging me to find some way to get that slab either down or open. The human part is just as strongly urging me to do nothing of the sort and to get away while I can!"

"He laughed again—shamefacedly.

"'Which shall it be?' he asked—and I thought that in his tone the human side of him was ascendant.

"'It will probably stay as it is—unless we blow it to bits,' I said.

"'I thought of that,' he answered, 'and—I wouldn't dare,' he added soberly enough. And even as I had spoken there came to me the same feeling that he had expressed. It was as though something passed out of the grey rock that struck my heart as a hand strikes an impious lip. We turned away—uneasily, and faced Thora coming through a breach on the terrace.

"'Miss Edith wants you quick,' she began—and stopped. Her eyes went past me to the grey rock. Her body grew rigid; she took a few stiff steps forward and then ran straight to it. She cast herself upon its breast, hands and face pressed against it; we heard her scream as though her very soul were being drawn from her—and watched her fall at its foot. As we picked her up I saw steal from her face the look I had observed when first we heard the crystal music of Nan-Tauach—that unhuman mingling of opposites!"

CHAPTER IV

The First Vanishings

"WE carried Thora back, down to where Edith was waiting. We told her what had happened and what we had found. She listened gravely, and as we finished Thora sighed and opened her eyes.

"'I would like to see the stone,' she said. 'Charles, you stay here with Thora.' We passed through the outer court silently—and stood before the rock. She touched it, drew back her hand as I had; thrust it forward again resolutely and held it there. She seemed to be listening. Then she turned to me.

"'David,' said my wife, and the wistfulness in her voice hurt me—'David, would you be very, very disappointed if we went from here—without trying to find out any more about it—would you?'

"Walter, I never wanted anything so much in my life as I wanted to learn what that rock concealed. Nevertheless, I tried to master my desire, and I answered—'Edith, not a bit if you want us to do it.'

"She read my struggle in my eyes. She turned back toward the grey rock. I saw a shiver pass through her. I felt a tinge of remorse and pity!

"'Edith,' I exclaimed, 'we'll go!'

"She looked at me again. 'Science is a jealous mistress,' she quoted. 'No, after all it may be just fancy. At any rate, you can't run away. No! But, Dave, I'm going to stay too!'

"And there was no changing her decision. As we neared the others she laid a hand on my arm.

"'Dave,' she said, 'if there should be something—well—inexplicable to-night—something that seems—too dangerous—will you promise to go back to our own islet to-morrow, if we can—and wait until the natives return?'

"I promised eagerly—the desire to stay and see what came with the night was like a fire within me.

"We picked a place about five hundred feet away from the steps leading into the center court.

"The spot we had selected was well hidden. We could not be seen, and yet we had a clear view of the stairs and the gateway. We settled down just before dusk to wait for whatever might come. I was nearest the giant steps; next me Edith; then Thora, and last Stanton.

"Night fell. After a time the eastern sky began to lighten, and we knew that the moon was rising; grew lighter still, and the orb peeped over the sea; swam into full sight. I glanced at Edith and then at Thora. My wife was intently listening. Thora sat, as she had since we had placed ourselves, elbows on knees, her hands covering her face.

"And then from the moonlight flooding us there dripped down on me a great drowsiness. Sleep seemed to seep from the rays and fall upon my eyes, closing them—closing them inexorably. Edith's hand in mine relaxed. Stanton's head fell upon his breast and his body swayed drunkenly. I tried to rise—to fight against the profound desire for slumber that pressed in on me.

"And as I fought Thora raised her head as though listening; and turned toward the gateway. There was infinite despair in her face—and expectancy. I tried again to rise—and a surge of sleep rushed over me. Dimly, as I sank within it, I heard a

crystalline chiming; I raised my lids once more with a supreme effort.

"Thora, bathed in light, was standing at the top of the stairs.

"Sleep took me for its very own—swept me into the heart of oblivion!

"Dawn was breaking when I wakened. Recollection rushed back; I thrust a panic-stricken hand out toward Edith; touched her and my heart gave a great leap of thankfulness. She stirred, sat up, rubbing dazed eyes. Stanton lay on his side, back toward us, head in arms.

"Edith looked at me laughingly. 'Heavens! What sleep!' she said. Memory came to her.

"'What happened?' she whispered. 'What made us sleep like that?'

"Stanton awoke.

"'What's the matter!' he exclaimed. 'You look as though you've been seeing ghosts.'

"Edith caught my hands.

"'Where's Thora?' she cried. Before I could answer she had run out into the open, calling.

"'Thora was taken,' was all I could say to Stanton. Together we went to my wife, now standing beside the great stone steps, looking up fearfully at the gateway into the terraces. There I told them what I had seen before sleep had drowned me. And together then we ran up the stairs, through the court and to the grey rock.

"The slab was closed as it had been the day before, nor was there trace of its having opened. No trace? Even as I thought this Edith dropped to her knees before it and reached toward something lying at its foot. It was a little piece of gay silk. I knew it for part of the kerchief Thora wore about her hair. She lifted the fragment. It had been cut from the kerchief as though by a razor-edge; a few threads ran from it—down toward the base of the slab; ran on to the base of the grey rock and—under it!

"The grey rock was a door! And it had opened and Thora had passed through it!

"I think that for the next few minutes we all were a little insane. We beat upon that portal with our hands, with stones and sticks. At last reason came back to us.

"GOODWIN, during the next two hours we tried every way in our power to force entrance through the slab. The rock resisted our drills. We tried explosions at the base with charges covered by rock. They made not the slightest impression on the surface, expending their force, of course, upon the slighter resistance of their coverings.

"Afternoon found us hopeless. Night was coming on and we would have to decide our course of action. I wanted to go to Ponape for help. But Edith objected that this would take hours and after we had reached there it would be impossible to persuade our men to return with us that night, if at all. What then was left? Clearly only one of two choices; to go back to our camp, wait for our men, and on their return try to persuade them to go with us to Nan-Tauach. But this would mean the abandonment of Thora for at least two days. We could not do it; it would have been too cowardly.

"The other choice was to wait where we were for night to come; to wait for the rock to open as it had the night before, and to make a sortie through it for Thora before it could close again.

"Our path lay clear before us. We had to spend that night on Nan-Tauach!

"We had, of course, discussed the sleep phenomena very fully. If our theory that lights, sounds, and Thora's disappearance were linked with secret religious rites of the natives, the logical inference was that the slumber had been produced by them, perhaps by vapors—you know as well as I, what extraordinary knowledge these Pacific peoples have of such things. Or the sleep might have been simply a coincidence and produced by emanations either gaseous or from plants, natural causes which had happened to coincide in their effects with the other manifestations. We made some rough and ready but effective respirators.

"As dusk fell we looked over our weapons. Edith was an excellent shot with both rifle and pistol. We had decided that my wife was to remain in the hiding-place. Stanton would take up a station on the far side of the stairway and I would place myself opposite him on the side near Edith. The place I picked out was less than two hundred feet from her, and I could reassure myself now and then as to her safety as it looked down upon the hollow wherein she crouched. From our respective stations Stanton and I could command the gateway entrance. His position gave him also a glimpse of the outer courtyard.

"A faint glow in the sky heralded the moon. Stanton and I took our places. The moon dawn increased rapidly; the disk swam up, and in a moment it was shining in full radiance upon ruins and sea.

"As it rose there came a curious little sighing sound from the inner terrace. Stanton straightened up and stared intently through the gateway, rifle ready.

"'Stanton, what do you see?' I called cautiously. He waved a silencing hand. I turned my head to look at Edith. A shock ran through me. She lay upon her side. Her face, grotesque with its nose and mouth covered by the respirator, was turned full toward the moon. She was again in deepest sleep!

"As I turned again to call to Stanton, my eyes swept the head of the steps and stopped, fascinated. For the moonlight had thickened. It seemed to be—curdled—there; and through it ran little gleams and veins of shimmering white fire. A languor passed through me. It was not the ineffable drowsiness of the preceding night. It was a sapping of all will to move. I tried to cry out to Stanton. I had not even the will to move my lips. Goodwin—I could not even move my eyes!

"Stanton was in the range of my fixed vision. I watched him leap up the steps and move toward the gateway. The curdled radiance seemed to await him. He stepped into it—and was lost to my sight.

"For a dozen heart beats there was silence. Then a rain of tinklings that set the pulses racing with joy and at once checked them with tiny fingers of ice—and ringing through them Stanton's voice from the courtyard—a great cry—a scream—filled with

ecstasy insupportable and horror unimaginable! And once more there was silence. I strove to burst the bonds that held me. I could not. Even my eyelids were fixed. Within them my eyes, dry and aching, burned.

"Then, Goodwin—I first saw the—inexplicable! The crystalline music swelled. Where I sat I could take in the gateway and its basalt portals, rough and broken, rising to the top of the wall forty feet above, shattered, ruined portals—unclimable. From this gateway an intenser light began to flow. It grew, it gushed, and out of it walked Stanton.

"Stanton! But—God! What a vision!"

A deep tremor shook him. I waited—waited.

CHAPTER V

Into the Moon Pool

"GOODWIN," Throckmartin went on at last, "I can describe him only as a thing of living light. He radiated light; was filled with light; overflowed with it. A shining cloud whirled through and around him in radiant swirls, shimmering tentacles, luminescent, coruscating spirals.

"His face shone with a rapture too great to be borne by living man, and was shadowed with insuperable misery. It was as though it had been remoulded by the hand of God and the hand of Satan, working together and in harmony. You have seen that seal upon my own. But you have never seen it in the degree that Stanton bore it. The eyes were wide open and fixed, as though upon some inward vision of hell and heaven!

"The light that filled and surrounded him had a nucleus, a core—something shiftingly human shaped —that dissolved and changed, gathered itself, whirled through and beyond him and back again. And as its shining nucleus passed through him Stanton's whole body pulsed radiance. As the luminescence moved, there moved above it, still and serene always, seven tiny globes of seven colors, like seven little moons.

"Then swiftly Stanton was lifted—levitated—up the unscalable wall and to its top. The glow faded from the moonlight, the tinkling music grew fainter. I tried again to move. The tears were running down now from my rigid lids and they brought relief to my tortured eyes.

"I have said my gaze was fixed. It was. But from the side, peripherally, it took in a part of the far wall of the outer enclosure. Ages seemed to pass and a radiance stole along it. Soon drifted into sight the figure that was Stanton. Far away he was—on the gigantic wall. But still I could see the shining spirals whirling jubilantly around and through him; felt rather than saw his tranced face beneath the seven moons. A swirl of crystal notes, and he had passed. And all the time, as though from some opened well of light, the courtyard gleamed and sent out silver fires that dimmed the moon-rays, yet seemed strangely to be a part of them.

"At last the moon neared the horizon. There came a louder burst of sound; the second, and last, cry of Stanton, like an echo of his first. Again the soft sighing from the inner terrace. Then—utter silence!

"The light faded; the moon was setting and with a rush life and power to move returned to me. I made a leap for the steps, rushed up them, through the gateway and straight to the grey rock. It was closed—as I knew it would be. But did I dream it or did I hear, echoing through it as though from vast distances a triumphant shouting?

"I ran back to Edith. At my touch she wakened; looked at me wanderingly; raised herself on a hand.

"'Dave!' she said, 'I slept—after all.' She saw the despair on my face and leaped to her feet. 'Dave!' she cried. 'What is it? Where's Charles?'

"I lighted a fire before I spoke. Then I told her. And for the balance of that night we sat before the flames, arms around each other—like two frightened children."

Abruptly Throckmartin held his hands out to me appealingly.

"Walter, old friend!" he cried. "Don't look at me as though I were mad. It's truth, absolute truth. Wait—" I comforted him as well as I could. After a little time he took up his story.

"Never," he said, "did man welcome the sun as we did that morning. As soon as it had risen we went back to the courtyard. The walls whereon I had seen Stanton were black and silent. The terraces were as they had been. The grey slab was in its place. In the shallow hollow at its base was—nothing. Nothing—there was nothing of Stanton anywhere on the islet—not a trace.

"What were we to do? Precisely the same arguments that had kept us there the night before held good now—and doubly good. We could not abandon these two; could not go as long as there was the faintest hope of finding them—and yet for love of each other how could we remain? I loved my wife, —how much I never knew until that day; and she loved me as deeply.

"'It takes only one each night,' she pleaded. 'Beloved, let it take me.'

"I wept, Walter. We both wept.

"'We will meet it together,' she said. And it was thus at last that we arranged it."

"That took great courage indeed, Throckmartin," I interrupted. He looked at me eagerly.

"You do believe then?" he exclaimed.

"I believe," I said. He pressed my hand with a grip that nearly crushed it.

"Now," he told me, "I do not fear. If I—fail, you will follow with help?"

I promised.

"WE talked it over carefully," he went on, "bringing to bear all our power of analysis and habit of calm, scientific thought. We considered minutely the time element in the phenomena. Although the deep chanting began at the very moment of moonrise, fully five minutes had passed between its full lifting and the strange sighing sound from the inner terrace. I went back in memory over the happenings of the night before. At least ten minutes had intervened between the first heralding sigh and the intensification of the moonlight in the courtyard. And this glow grew for at least ten minutes

more before the first burst of the crystal notes. Indeed, more than half an hour must have elapsed, I calculated, between the moment the moon showed above the horizon and the first delicate onslaught of the tinklings.

"'Edith!' I cried. 'I think I have it! The grey rock opens five minutes after upon the moonrise. But whoever or whatever it is that comes through it must wait until the moon has risen higher, or else it must come from a distance. The thing to do is not to wait for it, but to surprise it before it passes out the door. We will go into the inner court early. You will take your rifle and pistol and hide yourself where you can command the opening—if the slab does open. The instant it opens I will enter. It's our best chance, Edith. I think it's our only one.'

"My wife demurred strongly. She wanted to go with me. But I convinced her that it was better for her to stand guard without, prepared to help me if I were forced again into the open by what lay behind the rock.

"At the half-hour before moonrise we went into the inner court. I took my place at the side of the grey rock. Edith crouched behind a broken pillar twenty feet away; slipped her rifle-barrel over it so that it would cover the opening.

"The minutes crept by. The darkness lessened and through the breaches of the terrace I watched the far sky softly lighten. With the first pale flush the silence of the place intensified. It deepened; became unbearably—expectant. The moon rose, showed the quarter, the half, then swam up into full sight like a great bubble.

"Its rays fell upon the wall before me and suddenly upon the convexities I have described seven little circles of light sprang out. They gleamed, glimmered, grew brighter—shone. The gigantic slab before me flowed with them, silver wavelets of phosphorescence pulsed over its surface and then—it turned as though on a pivot, sighing softly as it moved!

"With a word to Edith I flung myself through the opening. A tunnel stretched before me. It glowed with the same faint silvery radiance. Down it I raced. The passage turned abruptly, passed parallel to the walls of the outer courtyard and then once more led downward.

"The passage ended. Before me was a high vaulted arch. It seemed to open into space; a space filled with lambent, coruscating, many-colored mist whose brightness grew even as I watched. I passed through the arch and stopped in sheer awe!

"In front of me was a pool. It was circular, perhaps twenty feet wide. Around it ran a low, softly curved lip of glimmering silvery stone. Its water was palest blue. The pool with its silvery rim was like a great blue eye staring upward.

"Upon it streamed seven shafts of radiance. They poured down upon the blue eye like cylindrical torrents; they were like shining pillars of rising from a sapphire floor.

"One was the tender pink of the pearl; one of the aurora's green; a third of deathly white; the fourth the blue in mother-of-pearl; a shimmering column of pale amber; a beam of amethyst; a shaft of molten silver. Such are the colors of the seven lights that stream upon the Moon Pool. I drew closer, awestricken. The shafts did not illumine the depths. They played upon the surface and seemed there to diffuse, to melt into it. The Pool drank them!

"Through the water tiny gleams of phosphorescence began to dart, sparkles and coruscations of pale incandescence. And far, far below I sensed a movement, a shifting glow as of a radiant body slowly rising.

"I looked upward, following the radiant pillars to their source. Far above were seven shining globes, and it was from these that the rays poured. Even as I watched their brightness grew. They were like seven moons set high in some caverned heaven. Slowly their splendor increased, and with it the splendor of the seven beams streaming from them.

"I TORE my own gaze away and stared at the Pool. It had grown milky, opalescent. The rays gushing into it seemed to be filling it; it was alive with sparklings, scintillations, glimmerings. And the luminescence I had seen rising from its depths was larger, nearer!

"A swirl of mist floated up from its surface. It drifted within the embrace of the rosy beam and hung there for a moment. The beam seemed to embrace it, sending through it little shining corpuscles, tiny rosy spiralings. The mist absorbed the rays, was strengthened by them, gained substance. Another swirl sprang into the amber shaft, clung and fed there, moved swiftly toward the first and mingled with it. And now other swirls arose, here and there, too fast to be counted; hung poised in the embrace of the light streams; flashed and pulsed into each other.

"Thicker and thicker still they arose until over the surface of the Pool was a pulsating pillar of opalescent mist steadily growing stronger; drawing within it life from the seven beams falling upon it; drawing to it from below the darting, incandescent atoms of the Pool. Into its centre was passing the luminescence rising from the far depths. And the pillar glowed, throbbed—began to send out questing swirls and tendrils—

"There forming before me was That which had walked with Stanton, which had taken Thora—the thing I had come to find!

"My brain sprang into action. My hand threw up the pistol and I fired shot after shot into the shining core.

"As I fired, it swayed and shook; gathered again. I slipped a second clip into the automatic and another idea coming to me took careful aim at one of the globes in the roof. From thence I knew came the force that shaped this Dweller in the Pool—from the pouring rays came its strength. If I could destroy them I could check its forming. I fired again and again. If I hit the globes I did no damage. The little motes in their beams danced with the motes in the mist, troubled. That was all.

"But up from the Pool like little bells, like tiny bursting bubbles of glass, swarmed the tinkling sounds—their pitch higher, all their sweetness lost, angry.

"And out from the Inexplicable swept a shining spiral.

"It caught me above the heart; wrapped itself around me. There rushed through me a mingled ecstasy and horror. Every atom of me quivered with delight and shrank with despair. There was nothing loathsome in it. But it was as though the icy soul of evil and the fiery soul of good had stepped together within me. The pistol dropped from my hand.

"So I stood while the Pool gleamed and sparkled; the streams of light grew more intense and the radiant Thing that held me gleamed and strengthened. Its shining core had shape—but a shape that my eyes and brain could not define. It was as though a being of another sphere should assume what it might of human semblance, but was not able to conceal that what human eyes saw was but a part of it. It was neither man nor woman; it was unearthly and androgynous. Even as I found its human semblance it changed. And still the mingled rapture and terror held me. Only in a little corner of my brain dwelt something untouched; something that held itself apart and watched. Was it the soul? I have never believed—and yet——

"Over the head of the misty body there suddenly sprang out seven little lights. Each was the color of the beam beneath which it rested. I knew now that the Dweller was—complete!

"I heard a scream. It was Edith's voice. It came to me that she had heard the shots and followed me. I felt every faculty concentrate into a mighty effort. I wrenched myself free from the gripping tentacle and it swept back. I turned to catch Edith, and as I did so slipped—fell.

"The radiant shape above the Pool leaped swiftly—and straight into it raced Edith, arms outstretched to shield me from it! God!

"She threw herself squarely within its splendor," he whispered. "It wrapped its shining self around her. The crystal tinklings burst forth jubilantly. The light filled her, ran through and around her as it had with Stanton; and dropped down upon her face—the look!

"But her rush had taken her to the very verge of the Moon Pool. She tottered; she fell—with the radiance still holding her, still swirling and winding around and through her—into the Moon Pool! She sank, and with her went—the Dweller!

"I dragged myself to the brink. Far down was a shining, many-colored nebulous cloud descending; out of it peered Edith's face, disappearing; her eyes stared up at me—and she vanished!

"'Edith!' I cried again. 'Edith, come back to me!'

"AND then a darkness fell upon me. I remember running back through the shimmering corridors and out into the courtyard. Reason had left me. When it returned I was far out at sea in our boat wholly estranged from civilization. A day later I was picked up by the schooner in which I came to Port Moresby.

"I have formed a plan; you must hear it, Goodwin—" He fell upon his berth. I bent over him. Exhaustion and the relief of telling his story had been too much for him. He slept like the dead.

All that night I watched over him. When dawn broke I went to my room to get a little sleep myself. But my slumber was haunted.

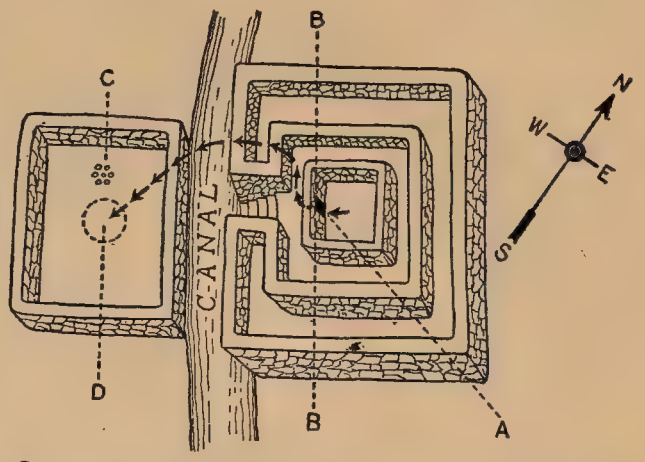
The next day the storm was unabated. Throckmartin came to me at lunch. He had regained much of his old alertness.

"Come to my cabin," he said. There, he stripped his shirt from him. "Something is happening," he said. "The mark is smaller." It was as he said.

"I'm escaping," he whispered jubilantly. "Just let me get to Melbourne safely, and then we'll see who'll win. For, Walter, I'm not at all sure that Edith is dead—as we know death—nor that the others are. There is something outside experience there—some great mystery."

And all that day he talked to me of his plans.

"There's a natural explanation, of course," he said. "My theory is that the moon rock is of some composition sensitive to the action of moon rays; somewhat as the element selenium is to sun rays. The little circles over the top are, without doubt, its operating agency. When the light strikes them they release the mechanism that opens the slab, just as you can open doors with sun or electric light by an



Dr. Throckmartin's sketch of the location of the moon door; the passageways, the probable location of the moon pool deep under Tau Islet, and the conjectured location of the seven lights. A is the moon rock on Nan-Tauach; BB, the bosses above it which control its opening; the arrows indicate Dr. Throckmartin's probable course beneath the walls and under the canal. C are the moon lights, and D the cavern of the moon pool on Tau Islet. Proper measurements are not observed in the sketch; the idea being solely to determine position.

ingenious arrangement of selenium-cells. Apparently it takes the strength of the full moon both to do this and to summon the Dweller in the Pool. We will first try a concentration of the rays of the waning moon upon these circles to see whether that will open the rock. If it does we will be able to investigate the Pool without interruption from—from—what emanates.

"Look, here on the chart are their locations. I have made this in duplicate for you in the event—of something happening—to me. And if I lose—you'll come after us, Goodwin, with help—won't you?"

And again I promised.

A little later he complained of increasing sleepiness.

"But it's just weariness," he said. "Not at all like that other drowsiness. It's an hour till moonrise still," he yawned at last. "Wake me up a good fifteen minutes before."

He lay upon the berth. I sat thinking. I came to myself with a guilty start. I had completely lost

myself in my deep preoccupation. What time was it? I looked at my watch and jumped to the port-hole. It was full moonlight; the orb had been up for fully half an hour. I strode over to Throckmartin and shook him by the shoulder.

"Up, quick, man!" I cried. He rose sleepily. His shirt fell open at the neck and I looked, in amazement, at the white band around his chest. Even under the electric light it shone softly, as though little flecks of light were in it.

Throckmartin seemed only half-awake. He looked down at his breast, saw the glowing cincture, and smiled.

"Yes," he said drowsily, "it's coming—to take me back to Edith! Well, I'm glad."

"Throckmartin!" I cried. "Wake up! Fight."

"Fight!" he said. "No use; come after us!"

He went to the port and sleepily drew aside the curtain. The moon traced a broad path of light straight to the ship. Under its rays the band around his chest gleamed brighter and brighter; shot forth little rays; seemed to writhe.

The lights went out in the cabin; evidently also throughout the ship, for I heard shoutings above.

Throckmartin still stood at the open port. Over his shoulder I saw a gleaming pillar racing along the moon path toward us. Through the window cascaded a blinding radiance. It gathered Throckmartin to it, clothed him in a robe of living opalescence. Light pulsed through and from him. The cabin filled with murmurings——

A wave of weakness swept over me, buried me in blackness. When consciousness came back the lights were again burning brightly.

But of Throckmartin there was no trace!

CHAPTER VI

"The Shining Devil Took Them!"

MY colleagues of the Association, and you others who may read this, my narrative, for what I did and did not when full realization returned I must offer here, briefly as I can, an explanation; a defense—if you will.

My first act was to spring to the open port. The coma had lasted hours, for the moon was now low in the west! I ran to the door to sound the alarm. It resisted under my frantic hands; would not open. Something fell tinkling to the floor. It was the key and I remembered then that Throckmartin had turned it before we began our vigil. With memory a hope died that I had not known was in me, the hope that he had escaped from the cabin, found refuge elsewhere on the ship.

And as I stooped, fumbling with shaking fingers for the key, a thought came to me that drove again the blood from my heart, held me rigid. I could sound no alarm on the *Southern Queen* for Throckmartin!

Conviction of my appalling helplessness was complete. The *ensemble* of the vessel from captain to cabin boy was, to put it conservatively, average. None, I knew, save Throckmartin and myself had seen the first apparition of the Dweller. Had they witnessed the second? I did not know, nor could I risk speaking, not knowing. And not seeing how could they believe? They would have thought me insane—or worse; even, it might be, his murderer.

I snapped off the electrics; waited and listened; opened the door with infinite caution and slipped, unseen, into my own stateroom. The hours until the dawn were eternities of waking nightmare. Reason, resuming sway at last, steadied me. Even had I spoken and been believed where in these wastes after all the hours could we search for Throckmartin? Certainly the captain would not turn back to Port Moresby. And even if he did of what use for me to set forth for the Nan-Matal without the equipment which Throckmartin himself had decided was necessary if one hoped to cope with the mystery that lurked there?

There was but one thing to do—follow his instructions; get the paraphernalia in Melbourne or Sydney if it were possible; if not sail to America as swiftly as might be, secure it there and as swiftly return to Ponape. And this I determined to do.

Calmness came back to me after I had made this decision. And when I went up on deck I knew that I had been right. They had not seen the Dweller. They were still discussing the darkening of the ship, talking of dynamos burned out, wires short circuited, a half dozen explanations of the extinguishment. Not until noon was Throckmartin's absence discovered. I told the captain that I had left him early in the evening; that, indeed, I knew him but slightly, after all. It occurred to none to doubt me, or to question me minutely. Why should it have? His strangeness had been noted, commented upon; all who had met him had thought him half mad. I did little to discourage the impression. And so it came naturally that on the log it was entered that he had fallen or leaped from the vessel some time during the night.

A report to this effect was made when we entered Melbourne. I slipped quietly ashore and in the press of the war news Throckmartin's supposed fate won only a few lines in the newspapers; my own presence on the ship and in the city passed unnoticed.

I was fortunate in securing at Melbourne everything I needed except a set of Becquerel ray condensers—but these were the very keystone of my equipment. Pursuing my search to Sydney I was doubly fortunate in finding a firm who were expecting these very articles in a consignment due them from the States within a fortnight. I settled down in strictest seclusion to await their arrival.

And now it will occur to you to ask why I did not cable, during this period of waiting, to the Association; demand aid from it. Or why I did not call upon members of the University staffs of either Melbourne or Sydney for assistance. At the least, why I did not gather, as Throckmartin had hoped to do, a little force of strong men to go with me to the Nan-Matal.

To the first two questions I answer frankly—I did not dare. And this reluctance, this inhibition, every man jealous of his scientific reputation will understand. The story of Throckmartin, the happenings I had myself witnessed, were incredible, abnormal, outside the facts of all known science. I shrank from the inevitable disbelief, perhaps ridicule—nay, perhaps even the graver suspicion that had caused me to seal my lips while on the ship.

Why I myself could only half believe! How then could I hope to convince others?

And as for the third question—I could not take men into the range of such a peril without first warning them of what they might encounter; and if I did warn them——

It was checkmate! If it also was cowardice—well, I have atoned for it. But I do not hold it so; my conscience is clear.

That fortnight and the greater part of another passed before the ship I awaited steamed into port. By that time, between my straining anxiety to be after Throckmartin, the despairing thought that every moment of delay might be vital to him and his, and my intensely eager desire to know whether that shining, glorious horror on the moon path did exist or had been hallucination, I was worn almost to the edge of madness.

At last the condensers were in my hands. It was more than a week later, however, before I could secure passage back to Port Moresby and it was another week still before I started north on the *Suwarna*, a swift little sloop with a fifty-horsepower auxiliary, heading straight for Ponape and the Nan-Matal.

WE sighted the *Brunhilda* some five hundred miles south of the Carolines. The wind had fallen soon after Papua had dropped astern. The *Suwarna's* ability to make her twelve knots an hour without it had made me very fully forgive her for not being as fragrant as the Javan flower for which she was named. Da Costa, her captain, was a garrulous Portuguese; his mate was a Canton man with all the marks of long and able service on some pirate junk; his engineer was a half-breed Chino-Malay who had picked up his knowledge of power plants, Heaven alone knew where, and, I had reason to believe, had transferred all his religious impulses to the American built deity of mechanism he so faithfully served. The crew was made up of six huge, chattering Tonga boys.

The *Suwarna* had cut through Finschafen Huon Gulf to the protection of the Bismarcks. She had threaded the maze of the archipelago tranquilly, and we were then rolling over the thousand-mile stretch of open ocean with New Hanover far behind us and our boat's bow pointed straight toward Nukuor of the Monte Verdes. After we had rounded Nukuor we should, barring accident, reach Ponape in not more than sixty hours.

It was late afternoon, and on the demure little breeze that marched behind us came far-flung sighs of spice-trees and nutmeg flowers. The slow, prodigious swells of the Pacific lifted us in gentle, giant hands and sent us as gently down the long, blue wave slopes to the next broad, upward slope. There was a spell of peace over the ocean, stilling even the Portuguese captain who stood dreamily at the wheel, slowly swaying to the rhythmic lift and fall of the sloop.

There came a whining hail from the Tonga boy lookout draped lazily over the bow.

"Sail he b'long port side!"

Da Costa straightened and gazed while I raised my glass. The vessel was a scant mile away, and must have been visible long before the sleepy watcher had seen her. She was a sloop about the size of the *Suwarna*, without power. All sails set, even to a spinnaker she carried, she was making the best of the little breeze. I tried to read her name, but the vessel jibed sharply as though the hands of the man at the wheel had suddenly dropped the helm—and then with equal abruptness swung back to her course. The stern came in sight, and on it I read *Brunhilda*.

I shifted my glasses to the man at the wheel. He was crouching down over the spokes in a helpless, huddled sort of way, and even as I looked the vessel veered again, abruptly as before. I saw the helmsman straighten up and bring the wheel about with a vicious jerk.

He stood so for a moment, looking straight ahead, entirely oblivious to us, and then seemed again to sink down within himself. It came to me that his was the action of a man striving vainly against a weariness unutterable. I swept the deck with my glasses. There was no other sign of life. I turned to find the Portuguese staring intently and with puzzled air at the sloop, now separated from us by a scant half mile.

"Something veree wrong I think there, sair," he said in his curious English. "The man on deck I know. He is captain and owner of the *Br-rwun'ild*. His name Olaf Huldricksson, what you say—Norwegian. He is eithair veree sick or veree tired—but I do not undweerstand where is the crew and the starb'd boat is gone——"

He shouted an order to the engineer and as he did so the faint breeze failed and the sails of the *Brunhilda* flapped down inert. We were now nearly abreast and a scant hundred yards away. The engine of the *Suwarna* died and the Tonga boys leaped to one of the boats.

"You Olaf Huldricksson!" shouted Da Costa. "What's a matter wit' you?"

The man at the wheel turned toward us. He was a giant; his shoulders enormous, thick chested, strength in every line of him, he towered like a viking of old at the rudder bar of his shark ship.

I raised the glass again; his face sprang into the lens and never have I seen a visage lined and marked as though by ages of unsleeping misery as was that of Olaf Huldricksson!

The Tonga boys had the boat alongside and were waiting at the oars. The little captain was dropping into it!

"Wait!" I cried. I ran into my cabin, grasped my emergency medical kit and climbed down the rope ladder. The Tonga boys bent to the oars. We reached the side and Da Costa and I each seized a lanyard dangling from the shrouds, and swung ourselves on board. Da Costa approached Huldricksson softly.

"What's the matter, Olaf?" he began—and then was silent, looking down at the wheel. The hands of Huldricksson were lashed fast to the spokes by thongs of thin, strong cord; they were swollen and black and the thongs had bitten into the sinewy wrists till they were hidden in the outraged flesh, cutting so deeply that blood fell, slow drop by drop, at his feet! We sprang toward him, reaching out hands to his fetters to loose them. Even as we touch them, Huldricksson aimed a vicious kick

at me and then another at Da Costa which sent the Portuguese tumbling into the scuppers.

"Let be!" croaked Huldricksson; his voice was thick and lifeless as though forced from a dead throat; his lips were cracked and dry and his parched tongue was black. "Let be! Go! Let be!"

The Portuguese had picked himself up, whimpering with rage and knife in hand, but as Huldricksson's voice reached him he stopped. Amazement crept into his eyes and as he thrust the blade back into his belt they softened with pity.

"Something veree wrong wit' Olaf," he murmured to me. "I think he crazee!" And then Olaf Huldricksson began to curse us. He did not speak—he howled from that hideously dry mouth his imprecations. And all the time his red eyes roamed the seas and his hands, clenched and rigid on the wheel, dropped blood.

"I go below," said Da Costa nervously. "His wife, his daughter—" He darted down the companionway and was gone.

Huldricksson, silent once more, had slumped down over the wheel.

Da Costa's head appeared at the top of the companion steps.

"There is nobody, nobody," he paused—then—"nobody—nowhere!" His hand flew out in a gesture of hopeless incomprehension. "I do not understan'."

Then Olaf Huldricksson opened his dry lips and as he spoke a chill ran through me, checking my heart.

"The sparkling devil took them!" croaked Olaf Huldricksson, "the sparkling devil took them! Took my Helma and my little Freda! The sparkling devil came down from the moon and took them!"

He swayed; tears dripped down his cheeks. Da Costa moved toward him again and again Huldricksson watched him, alertly, wickedly, from his bloodshot eyes.

I took a hypodermic from my case and filled it with morphine. I drew Da Costa to me.

"Get to the side of him," I whispered, "talk to him." He moved over toward the wheel.

"Where is your Helma and Freda, Olaf?" he said.

Huldricksson turned his head toward him. "The shining devil took them," he croaked. "The moon devil that spark——"

A yell broke from him. I had thrust the needle into his arm just above one swollen wrist and had quickly shot the drug through. He struggled to release himself and then began to rock drunkenly. The morphine, taking him in his weakness, worked quickly. Soon over his face a peace dropped. The pupils of the staring eyes contracted. Once, twice, he swayed and then, his bleeding, prisoned hands held high and still gripping the wheel, he crumpled to the deck.

WITH utmost difficulty we loosed the thongs, but at last it was done. We rigged a little sling and the Tonga boys slung the great inert body over the side into the dory. Soon we had Huldricksson in my bunk. Da Costa sent half his crew over to the sloop in charge of the Cantonese. They took in all sail, stripping Huldricksson's boat to the mast and then with the *Brunhilda* nosing quietly along after us at the end of a long hawser, one of the Tonga boys at her wheel, we resumed the way so enigmatically interrupted.

I cleansed and bandaged the Norseman's lacerated wrists and sponged the blackened, parched mouth with warm water and a mild antiseptic.

Suddenly I was aware of Da Costa's presence and turned. His unease was manifest and held, it seemed to me, a queer, furtive anxiety.

"What you think of Olaf, sair?" he asked. I shrugged my shoulders. "You think he killed his woman and his babee?" He went on. "You think he crazee and killed all?"

"Nonsense, Da Costa," I answered. "You saw the boat was gone. Most probably his crew mutinied and to torture him tied him up the way you saw. They did the same thing with Hilton of the *Coral Lady;* you'll remember."

"No," he said. "No. The crew did not. Nobody there on board when Olaf was tied."

"What!" I cried, startled. "What do you mean?"

"I mean," he said slowly, "that Olaf tie himself!"

"Wait!" he went on at my incredulous gesture of dissent. "Wait, I show you." He had been standing with hands behind his back and now I saw that he held in them the cut thongs that had bound Huldricksson. They were bloodstained and each ended in a broad leather tip skilfully spliced into the cord. "Look," he said, pointing to these leather ends. I looked and saw in them deep indentations of teeth. I snatched one of the thongs and opened the mouth of the unconscious man on the bunk. Carefully I placed the leather within it and gently forced the jaws shut on it. It was true. Those marks were where Olaf Huldricksson's jaws had gripped!

"Wait!" Da Costa repeated, "I show you." He took other cords and rested his hands on the supports of a chair back. Rapidly he twisted one of the thongs around his left hand, drew a loose knot, shifted the cord up toward his elbow. This left wrist and hand still free and with them he twisted the other cord around the right wrist; drew a similar knot. His hands were now in the exact position that Huldricksson's had been on the *Brunhilda* but with cords and knots hanging loose. Then Da Costa reached down his head, took a leather end in his teeth and with a jerk drew the thong that noosed his left hand tight; similarly he drew tight the second.

He strained at his fetters. There before my eyes he had pinioned himself so that without aid he could not release himself. And he was exactly as Huldricksson had been!

"You will have to cut me loose, sair," he said. "I cannot move them. It is an old trick on these seas. Sometimes it is necessary that a man stand at the wheel many hours, without help, and he does this so that if he sleep the wheel wake him, yes, sair."

I looked from him to the man on the bed.

"But why, sair," said Da Costa slowly, "did Olaf have to tie his hands?"

I looked at him, uneasily.

"I don't know," I answered. "Do you?"

He fidgeted, avoided my eyes, and then rapidly, almost surreptitiously crossed himself.

"No," he replied. "I know nothing. Some things

I have heard—but they tell many tales on these seas."

He started for the door. Before he reached it he turned. "But this I do know," he half whispered, "I am damned glad there is no full moon tonight." He passed out, leaving me staring after him in amazement. What did the Portuguese know?

I bent over the sleeper. On his face was no trace of that unholy mingling of opposites the Dweller stamped upon its victims.

And yet—what was it the Norseman had said? "The sparkling devil took them!" Nay, he had been even more explicit—"The sparkling devil that came down from the moon!"

Could it be that the Dweller had swept upon the *Brunhilda*, drawing down the moon path Olaf Huldricksson's wife and babe even as it had drawn Throckmartin?

As I sat thinking the cabin grew suddenly dark and from above came a shouting and patter of feet. Down upon us swept one of the abrupt, violent squalls that are met with in those latitudes. I lashed Huldricksson fast in the berth and ran up on deck.

The long, peaceful swells had changed into angry, choppy waves from the tops of which the spindrift streamed in long, stinging lashes.

A half-hour passed; the squall died as quickly as it had arisen. The sea quieted. Over in the west, from beneath the tattered, flying edge of the storm, dropped the red globe of the setting sun; dropped slowly until it touched the sea rim.

I watched it—and rubbed my eyes and stared again. For over its flaming portal something huge and black moved, like a gigantic beckoning finger!

Da Costa had seen it, too, and he turned the *Suwarna* straight toward the descending orb and its strange shadow. As we approached we saw it was a little mass of wreckage and that the beckoning finger was a wing of canvas, sticking up and swaying with the motion of the waves. On the highest point of the wreckage sat a tall figure calmly smoking a cigarette.

We brought the *Suwarna* to, dropped a boat, and with myself as coxswain pulled toward a wrecked hydro-airplane. Its occupant took a long puff at his cigarette, waved a cheerful hand, shouted a greeting. And just as he did so a great wave raised itself up behind him, took the wreckage, tossed it high in a swelter of foam, and passed on. When we had steadied our boat, where wreck and man had been was—nothing.

There came a tug at the side—, two muscular brown hands gripped it close to my left, and a sleek, black, wet head showed its top between them. Two bright, blue eyes that held deep within them a laughing deviltry looked into mine, and a long, lithe body drew itself gently over the thwart and seated its dripping self at my feet.

"Much obliged," said this man from the sea. "I knew somebody was sure to come along when the O'Keefe banshee didn't show up."

"The what?" I asked in amazement.

"The O'Keefe banshee—I'm Larry O'Keefe. It's a far way from Ireland, but not too far for the O'Keefe banshee to travel if the O'Keefe was going to click in."

I looked again at my astonishing rescue. He seemed perfectly serious.

"Have you a cigarette? Mine went out," he said with a grin, as he reached a moist hand out for the little cylinder, took it, lighted it.

I saw a lean, intelligent face whose fighting jaw was softened by the wistfulness of the clean-cut lips and the honesty that lay side by side with the deviltry in the laughing blue eyes; nose of a thoroughbred with the suspicion of a tilt; long, well-knit, slender figure that I knew must have all the strength of fine steel; the uniform of a lieutenant in the Royal Flying Corps of Britain's navy.

He laughed, stretched out a firm hand, and gripped mine.

"Thank you really ever so much, old man," he said.

I liked Larry O'Keefe from the beginning—but I did not dream as the Tonga boys pulled us back to the *Suwarna* how that liking was to be forged into man's strong love for man by fires which souls such as his and mine—and yours who read this—could never dream.

Larry! Larry O'Keefe, where are you now with your leprechawns and banshee, your heart of a child, your laughing blue eyes, and your fearless soul? Shall I ever see you again, Larry O'Keefe, dear to me as some best beloved younger brother? Larry!

CHAPTER VII

Larry O'Keefe

PRESSING back the questions I longed to ask, I introduced myself. Oddly enough, I found that he knew me, or rather my work. He had bought, it appeared, my volume upon the peculiar vegetation whose habitat is disintegrating lava rock and volcanic ash, that I had entitled, somewhat loosely, I could now perceive, *Flora of the Craters*. For he explained naïvely that he had picked it up, thinking it an entirely different sort of book, a novel in fact—something like Meredith's *Diana of the Crossways*, which he liked greatly.

He had hardly finished this explanation when we touched the side of the *Suwarna*, and I was forced to curb my curiosity until we reached the deck.

"That thing you saw me sitting on," he said, after he had thanked the bowing little skipper for his rescue, "was all that was left of one of his Majesty's best little hydro-airplanes after that cyclone threw it off as excess baggage. And by the way, about where are we?"

Da Costa gave him our approximate position from the noon reckoning.

O'Keefe whistled. "A good three hundred miles from where I left the H. M. S. *Dolphin* about four hours ago," he said. "That squall I rode in on was some whizzer!

"The *Dolphin*," he went on, calmly divesting himself of his soaked uniform, "was on her way to Melbourne. I'd been yearning for a joy ride and went up for an alleged scouting trip. Then

that blow shot out of nowhere, picked me up, and insisted that I go with it.

"About an hour ago I thought I saw a chance to zoom up and out of it. I turned, and *blick* went my upper right wing, and down I dropped."

"I don't know how we can notify your ship, Lieutenant O'Keefe," I said. "We have no wireless."

"Doctair Goodwin," said Da Costa, "we could change our course, sair—perhaps——"

"Thanks—but not a bit of it," broke in O'Keefe. "Lord alone knows where the *Dolphin* is now. Fancy she'll be nosing around looking for me. Anyway, she's just as apt to run into you as you into her. Maybe we'll strike something with a wireless, and I'll trouble you to put me aboard." He hesitated. "Where are you bound, by the way?" he asked.

"For Ponape," I answered.

"No wireless there," mused O'Keefe. "Beastly hole. Stopped a week ago for fruit. Natives seemed scared to death at us—or something. What are you going there for?"

Da Costa darted a furtive glance at me. It troubled me.

O'Keefe noted my hesitation.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," he said. "Maybe I oughtn't to have asked that?"

"It's no secret, Lieutenant," I replied. "I'm about to undertake some exploration work—a little digging among the ruins on the Nan-Matal."

I LOOKED at the Portuguese sharply as I named the place. A pallor crept beneath his skin and again he made swiftly the sign of the cross, glancing as he did so fearfully to the north. I made up my mind then to question him when opportunity came. He turned from his quick scrutiny of the sea and addressed O'Keefe.

"There's nothing on board to fit you, Lieutenant."

"Oh, just give me a sheet to throw around me, Captain," said O'Keefe and followed him. Darkness had fallen, and as the two disappeared into Da Costa's cabin I softly opened the door of my own and listened. Huldricksson was breathing deeply and regularly.

I drew my electric-flash, and shielding its rays from my face, looked at him. His sleep was changing from the heavy stupor of the drug into one that was at least on the borderland of the normal. The tongue had lost its arid blackness and the mouth secretions had resumed action. Satisfied as to his condition I returned to deck.

O'Keefe was there, looking like a spectre in the cotton sheet he had wrapped about him. A deck table had been cleated down and one of the Tonga boys was setting it for our dinner. Soon the very creditable larder of the *Suwarna* dressed the board, and O'Keefe, Da Costa, and I attacked it. The night had grown close and oppressive. Behind us the forward light of the *Brunhilda* glided and the binnacle lamp threw up a faint glow in which her black helmsman's face stood out mistily. O'Keefe had looked curiously a number of times at our tow, but had asked no questions.

"You're not the only passenger we picked up today," I told him. "We found the captain of that sloop, lashed to his wheel, nearly dead with exhaustion, and his boat deserted by everyone except himself."

"What was the matter?" asked O'Keefe in astonishment.

"We don't know," I answered. "He fought us, and I had to drug him before we could get him loose from his lashings. He's sleeping down in my berth now. His wife and little girl ought to have been on board, the captain here says, but—they weren't."

"Wife and child gone!" exclaimed O'Keefe.

"From the condition of his mouth he must have been alone at the wheel and without water at least two days and nights before we found him," I replied. "And as for looking for any one on these waters after such a time—it's hopeless."

"That's true," said O'Keefe. "But his wife and baby! Poor, poor devil!"

He was silent for a moment and then began to tell us stories of the great war and of what he had seen in Flanders of broken hearts and homes, and tragedies of motherhood and childhood. He had served there, it appeared, during the first year. He had been wounded at Ypres and, recovering, had been assigned to the naval service. For the last year he had been cruising along the Australian and New Zealand transport lanes.

"And while the war's over, still I'm homesick for the lark's land with the Boche planes playing tunes on their machine guns and the Hun Archies tickling the soles of my feet," he sighed. "If you're in love, love to the limit; and if you hate, why hate like the devil; and if it's a fight you're in, get where it's hottest and fight like hell—if you don't life's not worth the living," sighed he.

I watched him as he talked, feeling my liking for him steadily increasing. If I could but have a man like this beside me on the path of unknown peril upon which I had set my feet, I thought, wistfully. We sat and smoked a bit, sipping the strong coffee the Portuguese made so well.

Da Costa at last relieved the Cantonese at the wheel. O'Keefe and I drew chairs up to the rail. The brighter stars shone out dimly through a hazy sky; gleams of phosphorescence tipped the crests of the waves and sparkled with an almost angry brilliance as the bow of the *Suwarna* tossed them aside. O'Keefe pulled contentedly at a cigarette. The glowing spark lighted the keen, boyish face and the blue eyes, now black and brooding under the spell of the tropic night.

"Are you American or Irish, O'Keefe?" I asked suddenly.

"Why?" he laughed.

"Because," I answered, "from your name and your service I would suppose you Irish—but your command of pure Americanese makes me doubtful."

He grinned amiably.

"I'll tell you how that is," he said. "My mother is an American—a Grace, of Virginia. My father was the O'Keefe, of Coleraine. And these two loved each other so well that the heart they gave me is half Irish and half American. My father died when I was sixteen. I used to go to the States with

my mother every other year for a month or two. But after my father died we used to go to Ireland every other year. And there you are—I'm as much American as I am Irish.

"When I'm in love, or excited, or dreaming, or mad I have the brogue. But for the everyday purposes of life I like the United States talk, and I know Broadway as well as I do Binevenagh Lane, and the Sound as well as St. Patrick's Channel; educated a bit at Eton, a bit at Harvard; always too much money to have to make any; in love lots of times, and never a heartache after, that wasn't a pleasant one, and never a real purpose in life until I took the king's shilling and earned my wings; just thirty—and that's me—Larry O'Keefe."

"But it was the Irish O'Keefe who sat out there waiting for the banshee," I laughed.

"It was that," he said somberly, and I heard the brogue creep over his voice like velvet and his eyes grew brooding again. "There's never an O'Keefe for these thousand years that has passed without his warning. An' twice have I heard the banshee calling—once it was when my younger brother died an' once when my father lay waiting to be carried out on the ebb tide."

He mused a moment, then went on: "An' once I saw an *Annir Choille*, a girl of the green people, flit like a shade of green fire through Carntogher woods, an' once at Dunchraig I slept where the ashes of the Dun of Cormac MacConcobar are mixed with those of Cormac an' Eilidh the Fair, all burned in the nine flames that sprang from the harping of Cravetheen, an' I heard the echo of his dead harpings——"

He paused again and then, softly, with that curiously sweet, high voice that only the Irish seem to have, he sang:

Woman of the white breasts, Eilidh;
Woman of the gold-brown hair, and lips of the red, red rowan,
Where is the swan that is whiter, with breast more soft,
Or the wave on the sea that moves as thou movest, Eilidh.

CHAPTER VIII

Olaf's Story

THERE was a little silence. I looked upon him with wonder. Clearly he was in deepest earnest. I know the psychology of the Gael is a curious one and that deep in all their hearts their ancient traditions and beliefs have strong and living roots. And I was both amused and touched.

Here was this soldier, facing war and all its ugly realities open-eyed and fearless, picking, indeed, the most dangerous branch of service for his own, a modern if ever there was one, appreciative of most unmystical Broadway, and yet soberly and earnestly attesting to his belief in banshee, in shadowy people of the woods, and phantom harpers! I wondered what he would think if he could see the Dweller and then, with a pang, that perhaps his superstitions might make him an easy prey.

He shook his head half impatiently and ran a hand over his eyes; then turned to me and grinned.

"Don't think I'm cracked, Professor," he said. "I'm not. But it takes me that way now and then. It's the Irish in me. And, believe it or not, I'm telling you the truth."

I looked eastward where the moon, now nearly a week past the full, was mounting.

"You can't make me see what you've seen, Lieutenant," I laughed. "But you can make me hear. I've always wondered what kind of a noise a disembodied spirit could make without any vocal cords or breath or any other earthly sound-producing mechanism. How does the banshee sound?"

O'Keefe looked at me seriously.

"All right," he said. "I'll show you." From deep down in his throat came first a low, weird sobbing that mounted steadily into a keening whose mournfulness made my skin creep. And then his hand shot out and gripped my shoulder, and I stiffened like stone in my chair—for from behind us, like an echo, and then taking up the cry, swelled a wail that seemed to hold within it a sublimation of the sorrows of centuries! It gathered itself into one heartbroken, sobbing note and died away! O'Keefe's grip loosened, and he rose swiftly to his feet.

"It's all right, Professor," he said. "It's for me. It found me—all this way from Ireland."

Again the silence was rent by the cry. But now I had located it. It came from my room, and it could mean only one thing—Huldricksson had wakened.

"Forget your banshee!" I gasped, and made a jump for the cabin.

Out of the corner of my eye I noted a look of half-sheepish relief flit over O'Keefe's face, and then he was beside me. Da Costa shouted an order from the wheel, the Cantonese ran up and took it from his hands and the little Portuguese pattered down toward us. My hand on the door, ready to throw it open, I stopped. What if the Dweller were within—what if we had been wrong and it was not dependent for its power upon that full flood of moon ray which Throckmartin had thought essential to draw it from the blue pool!

From within, the sobbing wail began once more to rise. O'Keefe pushed me aside, threw open the door and crouched low within it. I saw an automatic flash dully in his hand; saw it cover the cabin from side to side, following the swift sweep of his eyes around it. Then he straightened and his face, turned toward the berth, was filled with wondering pity.

Through the window streamed a shaft of the moonlight. It fell upon Huldricksson's staring eyes; in them great tears slowly gathered and rolled down his cheeks; from his opened mouth came the woe-laden wailing. I ran to the port and drew the curtains. Da Costa snapped the lights.

The Norseman's dolorous crying stopped as abruptly as though cut. His gaze rolled toward us. And at one bound he broke through the leashes I had buckled round him and faced us, his eyes glaring, his yellow hair almost erect with the force of the rage visibly surging through him. Da Costa shrunk behind me. O'Keefe, coolly watching, took a quick step that brought him in front of me.

"Where do you take me?" said Huldricksson, and his voice was like the growl of a beast. "Where is my boat?"

I touched O'Keefe gently and stood before the giant.

"Listen, Olaf Huldricksson," I said. "We take you to where the sparkling devil took your Helma and your Freda. We follow the sparkling devil that came down from the moon. Do you hear me?" I spoke slowly, distinctly, striving to pierce the mists that I knew swirled around the strained brain. And the words did pierce.

He thrust out a shaking hand.

"You say you follow?" he asked falteringly. "You know where to follow? Where it took my Helma and my little Freda?"

"Just that, Olaf Huldricksson," I answered. "Just that! I pledge you my life that I know."

Da Costa stepped forward. "He speaks true, Olaf. You go faster on the *Suwarna* than on the *Br-rw-un'ilda*, Olaf, yes."

The giant Norseman, still gripping my hand, looked at him. "I know you, Da Costa," he muttered. "You are all right. *Ja!* You are a fair man. Where is the *Brunhilda?*"

"She follow be'ind on a big rope, Olaf," soothed the Portuguese. "Soon you see her. But now lie down an' tell us, if you can, why you tie yourself to your wheel an' what it is that happen, Olaf."

"If you'll tell us how the sparkling devil came it will help us all when we get to where it is, Huldricksson," I said.

ON O'Keefe's face there was an expression of well-nigh ludicrous doubt and amazement. He glanced from one to the other. The giant shifted his own tense look from me to the Irishman. A gleam of approval lighted in his eyes. He loosed me, and gripped O'Keefe's arm. *"Staerk!"* he said. *"Ja*—strong, and with a strong heart. A man—*ja!* He comes too—we shall need him—*ja!"*

"I tell," he muttered, and seated himself on the side of the bunk. "It was four night ago. My Freda"—his voice shook—*"Mine Yndling!* She loved the moonlight. I was at the wheel and my Freda and my Helma they were behind me. The moon was behind us and the *Brunhilda* was like a swan-boat sailing down with the moonlight sending her, *ja.*

"I heard my Freda say: 'I see a *nisse* coming down the track of the moon.' And I hear her mother laugh, low, like a mother does when her *Yndling* dreams. I was happy—that night—with my Helma and my Freda, and the *Brunhilda* sailing like a swan-boat, *ja.* I heard the child say, 'The *nisse* comes fast!' And then I heard a scream from my Helma, a great scream—like a mare when her foal is torn from her. I spun round fast, *ja!* I dropped the wheel and spun fast! I saw—" He covered his eyes with his hands.

The Portuguese had crept close to me, and I heard him panting like a frightened dog.

"I saw a white fire spring over the rail," whispered Olaf Huldricksson. "It whirled round and round, and it shone like—like stars in a whirlwind mist. There was a noise in my ears. It sounded like bells—little bells, *ja!* Like the music you make when you run your finger round goblets. It made me sick and dizzy—the bell noise.

"My Helma was—*indeholde*—what you say—in the middle of the white fire. She turned her face to me and she turned it on the child, and my Helma's face burned into my heart. Because it was full of fear, and it was full of happiness—of *glyaede.* I tell you that the fear in my Helma's face made me ice here"—he beat his breast with clenched hand—"but the happiness in it burned on me like fire. And I could not move—I could not move.

"I said in here"—he touched his head—"I said, 'It is Loki come out of Helvede. But he cannot take my Helma, for Christ lives and Loki has no power to hurt my Helma or my Freda! Christ lives! Christ lives!' I said. But the sparkling devil did not let my Helma go. It drew her to the rail; half over it. I saw her eyes upon the child and a little she broke away and reached to it. And my Freda jumped into her arms. And the fire wrapped them both and they were gone! A little I saw them whirling on the moon track behind the *Brunhilda*—and they were gone!

"The sparkling devil took them! Loki was loosed, and he had power. I turned the *Brunhilda,* and I followed where my Helma and *mine Yndling* had gone. My boys crept up and asked me to turn again. But I would not. They dropped a boat and left me. I steered straight on the path. I lashed my hands to the wheel that sleep might not loose them. I steered on and on and on—

"Where was the God I prayed when my wife and child were taken?" cried Olaf Huldricksson—and it was as though I heard Throckmartin asking that same bitter question. "I have left Him as He left me, *ja!* I pray now to Thor and to Odin, who can fetter Loki." He sank back, covering again his eyes.

"Olaf," I said, "what you have called the sparkling devil has taken ones dear to me. I, too, was following it when we found you. You shall go with me to its home, and there we will try to take from it your wife and your child and my friends as well. But now that you may be strong for what is before us, you must sleep again."

Olaf Huldricksson looked upon me and in his eyes was that something which souls must see in the eyes of Him the old Egyptians called the Searcher of Hearts in the Judgment Hall of Osiris.

"You speak truth!" he said at last slowly. "I will do what you say!"

He stretched out an arm at my bidding. I gave him a second injection. He lay back and soon he was sleeping. I turned toward Da Costa. His face was livid and sweating, and he was trembling pitiably. O'Keefe stirred.

"You did that mighty well, Dr. Goodwin," he said. "So well that I almost believed you myself."

"What did you think of his story, Mr. O'Keefe?" I asked.

His answer was almost painfully brief and colloquial.

* A Water Nymph.

"Nuts!" he said. I was a little shocked, I admit. "I think he's crazy, Dr. Goodwin," he corrected himself, quickly. "What else could I think?"

I turned to the little Portuguese without answering.

"There's no need for any anxiety tonight, Captain," I said. "Take my word for it. You need some rest yourself. Shall I give you a sleeping draft?"

"I do wish you would, Dr. Goodwin, sair," he answered gratefully. "Tomorrow, when I feel bettair—I would have a talk with you."

I nodded. He did know something then! I mixed him an opiate of considerable strength. He took it and went to his own cabin.

I locked the door behind him and then, sitting beside the sleeping Norseman, I told O'Keefe my story from end to end. He asked few questions as I spoke. But after I had finished he cross-examined me rather minutely upon my recollections of the radiant phases upon each appearance, checking these with Throckmartin's observations of the same phenomena in the Chamber of the Moon Pool.

"And now what do you think of it all?" I asked.

He sat silent for a while, looking at Huldricksson.

"Not what you seem to think, Dr. Goodwin," he answered at last, gravely. "Let me sleep over it. One thing of course is certain—you and your friend Throckmartin and this man here saw—something. But—" he was silent again and then continued with a kindness that I found vaguely irritating—"but I've noticed that when a scientist gets superstitious it—er—takes very hard!

"Here's a few things I can tell you now though," he went on while I struggled to speak—"I pray in my heart that we'll meet neither the *Dolphin* nor anything with wireless on board going up. Because, Dr. Goodwin, I'd dearly love to take a crack at your Dweller.

"And another thing," said O'Keefe. "After this—cut out the trimmings, Doc, and call me plain Larry, for whether I think you're crazy or whether I don't you're there with the nerve, Professor, and I'm *for* you.

"Good night!" said Larry and took himself out to the deck hammock he had insisted upon having slung for him, refusing the captain's importunities to use his own cabin.

And it was with extremely mixed emotions as to his compliment that I watched him go. Superstitious! I, whose pride was my scientific devotion to fact and fact alone! Superstitious—and this from a man who believed in banshees and ghostly harpers and Irish wood nymphs and no doubt in leprechawns and all their tribe!

Half laughing, half irritated, and wholly happy in even the part promise of Larry O'Keefe's comradeship on my venture, I arranged a couple of pillows, stretched myself out on two chairs and took up my vigil beside Olaf Huldricksson.

CHAPTER IX

A Lost Page of Earth

WHEN I awakened the sun was streaming through the cabin porthole. Outside a fresh voice lilted. I lay on my two chairs and listened. The song was one with the wholesome sunshine and the breeze blowing stiffly and whipping the curtains. It was Larry O'Keefe at his matins:

The little red lark is shaking his wings,
Straight from the breast of his love he springs.

Larry's voice soared.

His wings and his feathers are sunrise red,
He hails the sun and his golden head,
Good morning, Doc, you are long abed.

This last was a most irreverent interpolation, I well knew. I opened my door. O'Keefe stood outside, laughing. The *Suwarna*, her engines silent, was making fine headway under all sail, the *Brunhilda* skipping in her wake cheerfully with half her canvas up.

The sea was crisping and dimpling under the wind. Blue and white was the world as far as the eye could reach. Schools of little silvery green, flying fish broke through the water rushing on each side of us; flashed for an instant and were gone. Behind us gulls hovered and dipped. The shadow of mystery had retreated far over the rim of this wide awake and beautiful world and if, subconsciously, I knew that somewhere it was brooding and waiting, for a little while at least I was consciously free of its oppression.

"How's the patient?" asked O'Keefe.

He was answered by Huldricksson himself, who must have risen just as I left the cabin. The Norseman had slipped on a pair of pajamas and, giant torso naked under the sun, strode out upon us. We all of us looked at him a trifle anxiously. But Olaf's madness had left him. In his eyes was much sorrow, but the berserk rage was gone.

He spoke straight to me: "You said last night we follow?"

I nodded.

"It is where?" he asked again.

"We go first to Ponape and from there to Metalanim Harbor—to the Nan-Matal. You know the place?"

Huldricksson bowed—a white gleam as of ice showing in his blue eyes.

"It is there?" he asked.

"It is there that we must first search," I answered.

"Good!" said Olaf Huldricksson. "It is good!"

He looked at Da Costa inquiringly and the little Portuguese, following his thought, answered his unspoken question.

"We should be at Ponape tomorrow morning early, Olaf."

"Good!" repeated the Norseman. He looked away, his eyes tear-filled.

A restraint fell upon us; the embarrassment all

men experience when they feel a great sympathy and a great pity, to neither of which they quite know how to give expression. By silent consent we discussed at breakfast only the most casual topics.

When the meal was over Huldricksson expressed a desire to go aboard the *Brunhilda*.

The *Suwarna* hove to and Da Costa and he dropped into the small boat. When they reached the *Brunhilda's* deck I saw Olaf take the wheel and the two fall into earnest talk. I beckoned to O'Keefe and we stretched ourselves out on the bow hatch under cover of the foresail. He lighted a cigarette, took a couple of leisurely puffs, and looked at me expectantly.

"Well?" I asked.

"Well," said O'Keefe, "suppose you tell me what *you* think—and then I'll proceed to point out your scientific errors." His eyes twinkled mischievously.

"Larry," I replied, somewhat severely, "you may not know that I have a scientific reputation which, putting aside all modesty, I may say is an enviable one. You used a word last night to which I must interpose serious objection. You more than hinted that I had—superstitions. Let me inform you, Larry O'Keefe, that I am solely a seeker, observer, analyst, and synthesist of facts. I am not"—and I tried to make my tone as pointed as my words—"I am not a believer in phantoms or spooks, leprechawns, banshees, or ghostly harpers."

O'Keefe leaned back and shouted with laughter.

"Forgive me, Goodwin," he gasped. "But if you could have seen yourself solemnly disclaiming the banshee"—another twinkle showed in his eyes—"and then with all this sunshine and this wide-open world"—he shrugged his shoulders—"it's hard to visualize anything such as you and Huldricksson have described."

"I know how hard it is, Larry," I answered. "And don't think I have any idea that the phenomenon is supernatural in the sense spiritualists and table turners have given that word. I do think it is supernormal; energized by a force unknown to modern science—but that doesn't mean I think it outside the radius of science."

"Tell me your theory, Goodwin," he said. I hesitated—for not yet had I been able to put into form to satisfy myself any explanation of the Dweller.

"I think," I hazarded finally, "it is possible that some members of that race peopling the ancient continent which we know existed here in the Pacific, have survived. We know that many of these islands are honeycombed with caverns and vast subterranean spaces, literally underground lands running in some cases far out beneath the ocean floor. It is possible that for some reason survivors of this race sought refuge in the abyssmal spaces, one of whose entrances is on the islet where Throckmartin's party met its end.

"As for their persistence in these caverns—we know they possessed a high science. They may have gone far in the mastery of certain universal forms of energy—especially that we call light. They may have developed a civilization and a science far more advanced than ours. What I call the Dweller may be one of the results of this science. Larry—it may well be that this lost race is planning to emerge again upon earth's surface!"

"And is sending out your Dweller as a messenger, a scientific dove from their Ark?" I chose to overlook the banter in his question.

"DID you ever hear of the Chamats?" I asked him. He shook his head.

"In Papua," I explained, "there is a widespread and immeasurably old tradition that 'imprisoned under the hills' is a race of giants who once ruled this region 'when it stretched from sun to sun before the moon god drew the waters over it'—I quote from the legend. Not only in Papua but throughout Malaysia you find this story. And, so the tradition runs, these people—the Chamants-will one day break through the hills and rule the world; 'make over the world' is the literal translation of the constant phrase in the tale. It was Herbert Spencer who pointed out that there is a basis of fact in every myth and legend of man. It is possible that these survivors I am discussing form Spencer's fact basis for the Malaysian legend.[1]

"This much is sure— the moon door, which is clearly operated by the action of moon rays upon some unknown element or combination and the crystals through which the moon rays pour down upon the pool their prismatic columns, are humanly made mechanisms. So long as they are humanly made and so long as it *is* this flood of moonlight from which the Dweller draws its power of materialization, the Dweller itself, if not the product of the human mind, is at least dependent upon the product of the human mind for its appearance."

"Wait a minute, Goodwin," interrupted O'Keefe. "Do you mean to say you think that this thing is made of—well—of moonshine?"

"Moonlight," I replied, "is, of course, reflected sunlight. But the rays which pass back to earth after their impact on the moon's surface are profoundly changed. The spectroscope shows that they lose practically all the slower vibrations we call red and infra-red, while the extremely rapid vibrations we call the violet and ultra-violet are accelerated and altered. Many scientists hold that there is an unknown element in the moon—perhaps that which makes the gigantic luminous trails that radiate in all directions from the lunar crater Tycho—whose energies are absorbed by and carried on the moon rays.

"At any rate, whether by the loss of the vibrations of the red or by the addition of this mysterious force, the light of the moon becomes something entirely different from mere modified sunlight—just as the addition or subtraction of one other chemical in a compound of several makes the product a substance with entirely different energies and potentialities.

"Now these rays, Larry, are given perhaps still another mysterious activity by the globes through

[1]William Beebe, the famous American naturalist and ornithologist, recently fighting in France with America's air forces, called attention to this remarkable belief in an article printed not long ago in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Still more significant was it that he noted a persistent rumor that the breaking out of the buried race was close. W. J. B., Pres. I. A. of S.

which Throckmartin said they passed in the Chamber of the Moon Pool. The result is the necessary factor in the formation of the Dweller. There would be nothing scientifically improbable in such a process. Kubalski, the great Russian physicist, produced crystalline forms exhibiting every faculty that we call vital by subjecting certain combinations of chemicals to the action of highly concentrated rays of various colors. Something in light and nothing else produced their pseudo-vitality. We do not begin to know how to harness the potentialities of that electro-magnetic vibration of the ether we call light."

"Listen, Doc," said Larry earnestly, "I'll take everything you say about this lost continent, the people who used to live on it, and their caverns, for granted. But by the sword of Brian Boru, you'll never get me to fall for the idea that a bunch of moonshine can handle a big woman such as you say Throckmartin's Thora was, nor a two-fisted man such as you say Throckmartin was, nor Huldricksson's wife—and I'll bet she was one of those strapping big northern women too—you'll never get me to believe that any bunch of concentrated moonshine could handle them and take them waltzing off along a moonbeam back to wherever it goes. No, Doc, not on your life, *jamais de la vie*, as we said at the front—nix!"

"All right O'Keefe," I answered, now very much irritated indeed. "What's your theory?" And I could not resist adding: "Fairies?"

"Professor," he grinned, "if that Thing's a fairy it's Irish and when it sees me it'll be so glad there'll be nothing to it. 'I was lost, strayed, or stolen, Larry *avick*,' it'll say, 'an' I was so homesick for the old sod I was desp'rit,' it'll say, an' 'take me back quick before I do any more har-rm!' it'll tell me—an' that's the truth.

"Now don't get me wrong. I believe you all saw something all right. But what I think you saw was some kind of gas. All this region is volcanic and islands and things are constantly poking up from the sea. It's probably gas; a volcanic emanation; something new to us and that drives you crazy—lots of kinds of gas do that. It hit the Throckmartin party on that island and they probably were all more or less delirious all the time; thought they saw things; talked it over and—collective hallucination just like the Angels of Mons and other miracles of the war. Somebody sees something that looks like something else. He points it out to the man next him. 'Do you see it?' asks he. 'Sure I see it,' says the other. And there you are—collective hallucination.

"When your friends got it bad they most likely jumped overboard one by one. Huldricksson sails into a place where it is and it hits his wife. She grabs the child and jumps over. Maybe the moon rays make it luminous! I've seen gas on the front under the moon that looked like a thousand whirling dervish devils. Yes, and you could see the devil's faces in it. And if it got into your lungs nothing could ever make you think you hadn't seen real devils."

For a time I was silent.

"Larry," I said at last, "whether you are right or I am right, I must go to the Nan-Matal. Will you go with me, Larry?"

"Goodwin," he replied, "I surely will. I'm as interested as you are. If we don't run across the *Dolphin* I'll stick. I'll leave word at Ponape, to tell them where I am should they come along. If they report me dead for a while there's nobody to care. So that's all right. Only old man, be reasonable. You've thought over this so long, you're going bug, honestly you are."

And again, the gladness that I might have Larry O'Keefe with me, was so great that I forgot to be angry.

CHAPTER X

The Moon Pool

DA COSTA, who had come aboard unnoticed by either of us, now tapped me on the arm.

"Doctair Goodwin," he said, "can I see you in my cabin, sair?"

At last, then, he was going to speak. I followed him.

"Doctair," he said, when we had entered, "this is a veree strange thing that has happened to Olaf. Veree strange. An' the natives of Ponape, they have been very much excite' lately.

"Of what they fear I know nothing, nothing!" Again that quick, furtive crossing of himself. "But this I have to tell you. There came to me from Ranaloa last month a man, a German, a doctair, like you. His name was von Hetzdorp. I take him to Ponape an' the natives there they will not take him to the Nan-Matal where he wish to go—no! So I take him. We leave in a boat, wit' much instrument carefully tied up. I leave him there wit' the boat an' the food. He tell me to tell no one an' pay me not to. But you are a friend an' Olaf he depend much upon you an' so I tell you, sair."

"You know nothing more than this, Da Costa?" I asked. "Nothing of another expedition?"

"No," he shook his head vehemently. "Nothing more."

"Hear the name Throckmartin while you were there?" I persisted.

"No," his eyes were steady as he answered but the pallor had crept again into his face.

I was not so sure. But if he knew more than he had told me why was he afraid to speak? My anxiety deepened and later I sought relief from it by repeating the conversation to O'Keefe.

"So!" He whistled. "Well, that means trouble. Now I'll pray to all the fairies in Ireland that we don't meet up with the *Dolphin*."

His prayers must have been powerful, for the next morning we raised Ponape, without further incident, and before noon the *Suwarna* and the *Brunhilda* had dropped anchor in the harbor. Upon the excitement and manifest dread of the natives, when we sought among them for carriers and workmen to accompany us, I will not dwell. It is enough to say that no payment we offered could induce a single one of them to go to the Nan-Matal. Nor would they say why.

Finally it was agreed that the *Brunhilda* should be left in charge of a half-breed Chinaman, whom

both Da Costa and Huldricksson knew and trusted. We piled her long-boat up with my instruments and food and camping equipment. The *Suwarna* took us around to Metalanim Harbor, and there, with the tops of ancient sea walls deep in the blue water beneath us, and the ruins looming up out of the mangroves, a scant mile from us, left us.

Then with Huldricksson manipulating our small sail, and Larry at the rudder, we rounded the titanic wall that swept down into the depths, and turned at last into the canal that Throckmartin, on his map, had marked as that which, running between frowning Nan-Tauach and its satellite islet, Tau, led straight to the gate of the place of ancient mysteries.

And as we entered that channel we were enveloped by a silence; a silence so intense, so—weighted that it seemed to have substance; an alien silence that clung and stifled and still stood aloof from us—the living. It was a stillness, such as might follow the long tramping of millions into the grave; it was—paradoxical as it may be—filled with the withdrawal of life.

Standing down in the chambered depths of the Great Pyramid I had known something of such silence—but never such intensity as this. Larry felt it and I saw him look at me askance. If Olaf, sitting in the bow, felt it, too, he gave no sign; his blue eyes, with the glint of ice within them again, watched the channel before us.

As we passed, there arose upon our left sheer walls of black basalt blocks, cyclopean, towering fifty feet or more, broken here and there by the sinking of their deep foundations.

In front of us the mangroves widened out and filled the canal. On our right the lesser walls of Tau, sombre blocks smoothed and squared and set with a cold, mathematical nicety that filled me with vague awe, slipped by. Through breaks I caught glimpses of dark ruins and of great fallen stones that seemed to crouch and menace us, as we passed. Somewhere there, hidden, were the seven globes that poured the moon fire down upon the Moon Pool.

Now we were among the mangroves and, sail down, the three of us pushed and pulled the boat through their tangled roots and branches. The noise of our passing split the silence like a profanation, and from the ancient bastions came murmurs—forbidding, strangely sinister. And now we were through, floating on a little open space of shadow-filled water. Before us lifted the gateway of Nan-Tauach, gigantic, broken, incredibly old; shattered portals through which had passed men and women of earth's dawn; old with a weight of years that pressed leadenly upon the eyes that looked upon it, and yet was—in some curious indefinable way—menacingly defiant.

BEYOND the gate, back from the portals, stretched a flight of enormous basalt slabs, a giant's stairway indeed; and from each side of it marched the high walls that were the Dweller's pathway. None of us spoke as we grounded the boat and dragged it up on a half-submerged pier. And when we did speak it was in whispers.

"What next?" asked Larry.

"I think we ought to take a look around," I replied in the same low tones. "We'll climb the wall here and take a flash about. The whole place ought to be plain as day from that height."

Huldricksson, his blue eyes alert, nodded. With the greatest difficulty we clambered up the broken blocks.

To the east and south of us, set like children's blocks in the midst of the sapphire sea, lay dozens of islets, none of them covering more than two square miles of surface; each of them a perfect square or oblong within its protecting walls.

On none was there sign of life, save for a few great birds that hovered here and there, and gulls dipping in the blue waves beyond.

We turned our gaze down upon the island on which we stood. It was, I estimated, about three-quarters of a mile square. The sea wall enclosed it. It was really an enormous basalt-sided open cube, and within it two other open cubes. The enclosure between the first and second wall was stone paved, with here and there a broken pillar and long stone benches. The hibiscus, the aloe-tree, and a number of small shrubs had found place, but seemed only to intensify its stark loneliness.

"Wonder where the German can be?" asked Larry.

I shook my head. There was no sign of life here. Had von Hetzdorp gone—or had the Dweller taken him, too? Whatever had happened, there was no trace of him below us or on any of the islets within our range of vision. We scrambled down the side of the gateway. Olaf looked at me wistfully.

"We start the search now, Olaf," I said. "And first, O'Keefe, let us see whether the grey stone is really here. After that we will set up camp, and while I unpack, you and Olaf search the island. It won't take long."

Larry gave one look at his service automatic and grinned. "Lead on *Macduff*," he said. We made our way up the steps, through the outer enclosures and into the central square. I confess to a fire of scientific curiosity and eagerness tinged with a dread that O'Keefe's analysis might be true. Would we find the moving slab and, if so, would it be as Throckmartin had described? If so, then even Larry would have to admit that here was something that theories of gases and luminous emanations would not explain and the first test of the whole amazing story would be passed. But if not——

And there before us, the faintest tinge of grey setting it apart from its neighboring blocks of basalt, was the moon door!

There was no mistaking it. This was, in very deed, the portal through which Throckmartin had seen pass that gloriously dreadful apparition he called the Dweller. At its base, was the curious, seemingly polished, cup-like depression within which, my lost friend had told me, the opening door swung.

What was that portal—more enigmatic than was ever sphinx? And what lay beyond it? What did that smooth stone, whose wan deadness whispered of ages old corridors of time opening out into alien, unimaginable vistas, hide? It had cost the world of science Throckmartin's great brain—as it had cost Throckmartin those he loved. It had drawn me

to it in search of Throckmartin—and its shadow had fallen upon the soul of Olaf the Norseman; and upon what thousands upon thousands more I wondered, since the brains that had conceived it had vanished with their secret knowledge?

What lay beyond it?

I stretched out a shaking hand and touched the surface of the slab. A faint thrill passed through my hand and arm, oddly unfamiliar and as oddly unpleasant; as of electric contact holding the very essence of cold. O'Keefe, watching, imitated my action. As his fingers rested on the stone his face filled with astonishment.

"It's the door?" he asked. I nodded. There was a low whistle from him and he pointed up toward the top of the grey stone. I followed the gesture and saw, above the moon door and on each side of it, two gently curving bosses of rock, perhaps a foot in diameter.

"The moon door's keys," I said.

"It begins to look so," answered Larry. "If we can find them," he added.

"There's nothing we can do till moonrise," I replied. "And we've none too much time to prepare as it is. Come!"

A little later we were beside our boat. We lightered it, set up the tent, and as it was now but a short hour to sundown I bade them leave me and make their search. They went off together, and I busied myself with opening some of the paraphernalia I had brought with me.

First of all I took out the two Becquerel ray-condensers that I had bought in Sydney. Their lenses would collect and intensify to the fullest extent any light directed upon them. I had found them most useful in making spectroscopic analysis of luminous vapors, and I knew that at Yerkes Observatory splendid results had been obtained from them in collecting the diffused radiance of the nebulæ for the same purpose.

IF my theory of the grey slab's mechanism were correct, it was practically certain that with the satellite only a few nights past the full we could concentrate enough light on the bosses to open the rock. And as the ray-streams through the seven globes described by Throckmartin would be too weak to energize the Pool, we could enter the chamber free from any fear of encountering its tenant, make our preliminary observations and go forth before the moon had dropped so far that the concentration in the condensers would fall below that necessary to keep the portal from closing.

I took out also a small spectroscope, and a few other instruments for the analysis of certain light manifestations and the testing of metal and liquid. Finally, I put aside my emergency medical kit.

I had hardly finished examining and adjusting these before O'Keefe and Huldricksson returned. They reported signs of a camp at least ten days old beside the northern wall of the outer court, but beyond that no evidence of others beyond ourselves on Nan-Tauach.

We prepared supper, ate and talked a little, but for the most part were silent. Even Larry's high spirits were not in evidence; half a dozen times I saw him take out his automatic and look it over. He was more thoughtful than I had ever seen him. Once he went into the tent, rummaged about a bit and brought out another revolver which, he said, he had got from Da Costa, and a half-dozen clips of cartridges. He passed the gun over to Olaf.

At last a glow in the southeast heralded the rising moon. I picked up my instruments and the medical kit; Larry and Olaf shouldered each a short ladder that was part of my equipment, and, with our electric flashes pointing the way, walked up the great stairs, through the enclosures, and straight to the grey stone.

By this time the moon had risen and its clipped light shone full upon the slab. I saw faint gleams pass over it as of fleeting phosphorescence—but so faint were they that I could not be sure of the truth of my observation.

We set the ladders in place. Olaf I assigned to stand before the door and watch for the first signs of its opening—if open it should. The Becquerels were set within three-inch tripods, whose feet I had equipped with vacuum cups to enable them to hold fast to the rock.

I scaled one ladder and fastened a condenser over the boss; descended; sent Larry up to watch it, and, ascending the second ladder, rapidly fixed the other in its place. Then, with O'Keefe watchful on his perch, I on mine, and Olaf's eyes fixed upon the moon door, we began our vigil. Suddenly there was an exclamation from Larry.

"Seven little lights are beginning to glow on this stone!" he cried.

But I had already seen those beneath my lens begin to gleam out with a silvery lustre. Swiftly the rays within the condenser began to thicken and increase, and as they did so the seven small circles waxed like stars growing out of the dusk, and with a queer—curdled is the best word I can find to define it—radiance entirely strange to me.

Beneath me I heard a faint, sighing murmur and then the voice of Huldricksson:

"It opens—the stone turns——"

I began to climb down the ladder. Again came Olaf's voice:

"The stone—it is open—" And then a shriek, a wail of blended anguish and pity, of rage and despair—and the sound of swift footsteps racing through the wall beneath me!

I dropped to the ground. The moon door was wide open, and through it I caught a glimpse of a corridor filled with a faint, pearly vaporous light like earliest misty dawn. But of Olaf I could see—nothing! And even as I stood, gaping, from behind me came the sharp crack of a rifle; the glass of the condenser at Larry's side flew into fragments; he dropped swiftly to the ground, the automatic in his hand flashed once, twice, into the darkness.

And the moon door began to pivot slowly, slowly back into its place!

I rushed toward the turning stone with the wild idea of holding it open. As I thrust my hands against it there came at my back a snarl and an oath and Larry staggered under the impact of a body that had flung itself straight at his throat. He reeled at the lip of the shallow cup at the base of

the slab, slipped upon its polished curve, fell and rolled with that which had attacked him, kicking and writhing, straight through the narrowing portal into the passage!

Forgetting all else, I sprang to his aid. As I leaped I felt the closing edge of the moon door graze my side. Then, as Larry raised a fist, brought it down upon the temple of the man who had grappled with him and rose from the twitching body unsteadily to his feet, I heard shuddering past me a mournful whisper; spun about as though some giant's hand had whirled me——

The end of the corridor no longer opened out into the moonlit square of ruined Nan-Tauach. It was barred by a solid mass of glimmering stone. The moon door had closed!

O'Keefe took a stumbling step toward the barrier behind us. There was no mark of juncture with the shining walls; the slab fitted into the sides as closely as a mosaic.

"It's shut all right," said Larry. "But if there's a way in, there's a way out. Anyway, Doc, we're right in the pew we've been heading for—so why worry?" He grinned at me cheerfully. The man on the floor groaned, and he dropped to his knees beside him.

"Von Hetzdorp!" he cried.

AT my exclamation he moved aside, turning the face so I could see it. It was clearly German, and just as clearly its possessor was one of unusual force and intellect.

The strong, massive brow with orbital ridge unusually developed, the dominant, high-bridged nose, the straight lips with their more than suggestion of latent cruelty, and the strong lines of the jaw beneath a black, pointed beard all gave evidence that here was a personality beyond the ordinary.

"Couldn't be anybody else," said Larry, breaking in on my thoughts. "He must have been watching us over there from Chau-ta-leur's vault all the time."

Swiftly he ran practised hands over his body; then stood erect, holding out to me two wicked-looking magazine pistols and a knife. "He got one of my bullets through his right forearm, too," he said. "Just a flesh wound, but it made him drop his rifle. Some arsenal, our little German scientist, what?"

I opened my medical kit. The wound was a slight one, and Larry stood looking on as I bandaged it.

"Got another one of those condensers?" he asked, suddenly. "And do you suppose Olaf will know enough to use it?"

"Larry," I answered, "Olaf's not outside! He's in here somewhere!"

His jaw dropped.

"The hell you say!" he whispered.

"Didn't you hear him shriek when the stone opened?" I asked.

"I heard him yell, yes," he said. "But I didn't know what was the matter. And then this wild cat jumped me—" He paused and his eyes widened. "Which way did he go?" he asked swiftly. I pointed down the faintly glowing passage.

"There's only one way," I said.

"Watch that bird close," hissed O'Keefe, pointing to von Hetzdorp—and pistol in hand stretched his long legs and raced away. I looked down at the German. His eyes were open, and he reached out a hand to me. I lifted him to his feet.

"I have heard," he said. "We follow, quick. If you will take my arm, please, I am shaken yet, yes—" I gripped his shoulder without a word, and the two of us set off down the corridor after Larry. Von Hetzdorp was gasping, and his weight pressed upon me heavily, but he moved with all the will and strength that were in him.

As we ran I took a hasty note of the tunnel. Its sides were smooth and polished, and the light seemed to come not from their surfaces, but from far within them—giving to the walls an illusive aspect of distance and depth; rendering them in a peculiarly weird way—spacious. The passage turned, twisted, ran down, turned again. It came to me that the light that illumined the tunnel was given out by tiny points deep within the stone, sprang from the points ripplingly and spread upon their polished faces.

There was a cry from Larry far ahead.

"Olaf!"

I gripped von Hetzdorp's arm closer and we sped on. Now we were coming fast to the end of the passage. Before us was a high arch, and through it I glimpsed a dim, shifting luminosity as of mist filled with rainbows. We reached the portal and I looked into a chamber that might have been transported from that enchanted palace of the Jinn King that rises beyond the magic mountains of Kaf.

Before me stood O'Keefe, and a dozen feet in front of him, Huldricksson, with something clasped tightly in his arms. The Norseman's feet were at the verge of a shining, silvery lip of stone within whose oval lay a blue pool. And down upon this pool staring upward like a gigantic eye, fell seven pillars of phantom light—one of them amethyst, one of rose, another of white, a fourth of blue, and three of emerald, of silver, and of amber. They fell each upon the azure surface, and I knew that these were the seven streams of radiance, within which the Dweller took shape—now but pale ghosts of their brilliancy when the full energy of the moon stream raced through them.

Huldricksson bent and placed on the shining silver lip of the Pool that which he held—and I saw that it was the body of a child! He set it there so gently, bent over the side and thrust a hand down into the water. And as he did so he moaned and lurched against the little body that lay before him. Instantly the form moved—and slipped over the verge into the blue. Huldricksson threw his body over the stone, hands clutching, arms thrust deep down—and from his lips issued a long-drawn, heart-shrivelling wail of pain and of anguish that held in it nothing human!

Close on its wake came a cry from von Hetzdorp.

"Gott!" shrieked the German. "Drag him back! Quick!"

HE leaped forward, but before he could half clear the distance, O'Keefe had leaped too, had caught the Norseman by the shoulders and toppled him backward, where he lay whimpering and sob-

bing. And as I rushed behind the German I saw Larry lean over the lip of the Pool and cover his eyes with a shaking hand; saw von Hetzdorp peer into it with real pity in his cold eyes.

Then I stared down myself into the Moon Pool, and there, sinking, was a little maid whose dead face and fixed, terror-filled eyes looked straight into mine; and ever sinking slowly, slowly—vanished! And I knew that this was Olaf's Freda, his beloved *yndling!*

But where was the mother, and where had Olaf found his babe?

The German was first to speak.

"You have nitroglycerin there, yes?" he asked, pointing toward my medical kit that I had gripped unconsciously and carried with me during the mad rush down the passage. I nodded and drew it out.

"Hypodermic," he ordered next, curtly; took the syringe, filled it accurately with its one one-hundredth of a grain dosage, and leaned over Huldricksson. He rolled up the sailor's sleeves half-way to the shoulder. The arms were white with somewhat of that weird semitranslucence that I had seen on Throckmartin's breast where a tendril of the Dweller had touched him; and his hands were of the same whiteness—like a baroque pearl. Above the line of white, von Hetzdorp thrust the needle.

"He will need all his heart can do," he said to me.

Then he reached down into a belt about his waist and drew from it a small, flat flask of what seemed to be lead. He opened it and let a few drops of its contents fall on each arm of the Norwegian. The liquid sparkled and instantly began to spread over the skin much as oil or gasoline dropped on water does—only far more rapidly. And as it spread it drew a sparkling film over the marbled flesh and little wisps of vapor rose from it. The Norseman's mighty chest heaved with agony. His hands clenched. The German gave a grunt of satisfaction at this, dropped a little more of the liquid, and then, watching closely, grunted again and leaned back. Huldricksson's labored breathing ceased, his head dropped upon Larry's knee, and from his arms and hands the whiteness swiftly withdrew.

Von Hetzdorp arose and contemplated us—almost benevolently.

"He will be all right in five minutes," he said. "I know. I do it to pay for that shot of mine, and also because we will need him. Yes." He turned to Larry. "You have a poonch like a mule kick, my young friend," he said. "Some time you pay me for that, too, eh?" He smiled; and the quality of the grimace was not exactly reassuring. Larry looked him over quizzically.

"You're von Hetzdorp, of course," he said. The German nodded, betraying no surprise at the recognition.

"And you?" he asked.

"Lieutenant O'Keefe of the Royal Flying Corps," replied Larry, saluting. "And this gentleman is Dr. Walter T. Goodwin."

Von Hetzdorp's face brightened.

"The American botanist?" he queried. I nodded.

"*Ach!*" cried von Hetzdorp eagerly, "but this is fortunate. Long I have desired to meet you. Your work, for an American, is most excellent; surprising. But you are wrong in your theory of the development of the Angiospermæ from *Cycadeoidea dacotensis. Ja*—all wrong——"

I was interrupting him with considerable heat, for my conclusions from the fossil *Cycadeoidea* I knew to be my greatest triumph, when Larry broke in upon me rudely.

"Say," he sputtered, "am I crazy or are you? What in damnation kind of a place and time is this to start an argument like that?

"Angiospermæ, is it?" exclaimed Larry. "*Hell!*"

Von Hetzdorp again regarded him with that irritating air of benevolence.

"You have not the scientific mind, young friend," he said. "The poonch, yes! But so has the mule. You must learn that only the fact is important—not you, not me, not this"—he pointed to Huldricksson—"or its sorrows. Only the fact, whatever it is, is real, yes. But"—he turned to me—"another time——"

Huldricksson interrupted him. The big seaman had risen stiffly to his feet and stood with Larry's arm supporting him. He stretched out his hands to me.

"I saw her," he whispered. "I saw *mine* Freda when the stone swung. She lay there—just at my feet. I picked her up and I saw that *mine* Freda was dead. But I hoped—and I thought maybe *mine* Helma was somewhere here, too. So I ran with *mine yndling*—here—" His voice broke. "I thought maybe she *was* not dead," he went on. "And I saw that"—he pointed to the Moon Pool—"and I thought I would bathe her face and she might live again. And when I dipped my hands within—the life left them, and cold, deadly cold, ran up through them into my heart. And *mine* Freda—she fell—" he covered his eyes, and dropping his head on O'Keefe's shoulder, stood, racked by sobs that seemed to tear at his very soul.

CHAPTER XI

The Flame-Tipped Shadows

VON HETZDORF nodded his head solemnly as Olaf finished.

"*Ja!*" he said. "That which comes from here took them both—the woman and the child. *Ja!* They came clasped within it and the stone shut upon them. But why it left the child behind I do not understand."

"How do you know that?" I cried in amazement.

"Because I saw it," answered von Hetzdorp simply. "Not only did I see it, but hardly had I time to make escape through the entrance before it passed whirling and murmuring and its bell sounds all joyous. *Ja!* It was what you call the squeak close, that."

"Wait a moment," I said—stilling Larry with a gesture. "Do I understand you to say that you were within this place?"

Von Hetzdorp actually beamed upon me.

"*Ja,* Dr. Goodwin," he said, "I went in when that which comes from it went out!"

I gaped at him, stricken dumb; into Larry's bellicose attitude crept a suggestion of grudging respect; Olaf, trembling, watched silently.

"Dr. Goodwin and my impetuous young friend, you," went on von Hetzdorp after a moment's silence—and I wondered vaguely why he did not include Huldricksson in his address—"it is time that we have an understanding. I have a proposal to make to you also. It is this; we are in what you call a bad boat, and all of us are in it. *Ja!* We need all hands, is it not so? Let us put together our knowledge and our brains and resources—and even a poonch of a mule is a resource," he looked wickedly at O'Keefe, "and pull our boat into quiet waters again. After that——"

"All very well, von Hetzdorp," interjected Larry, "but I don't feel very safe in any boat with somebody capable of shooting me through the back."

Von Hetzdorp waved a deprecatory hand.

"It was natural that," he said, "logical, *Ja.* Here is a very great secret, perhaps many secrets to Germany invaluable—" He paused, shaken by some overpowering emotion; the veins in his forehead grew congested, the cold eyes blazed and the guttural voice harshened.

"I do not apologize and I do not explain," rasped von Hetzdorp, "but I tell you, *Ja!* Here is the Vaterland prostrate with all the world at its throat; a pack of wolves gathered to rend the Vaterland to pieces, *Ja!* And here are you Lieutenant O'Keefe of the English wolves, and you Dr. Goodwin of the Yankee pack—and here in this place may be that which will enable Germany to rise and stamp out the wolves, and get back her place in the sun and take all that is rightfully hers. What are the lives of you two and this sailor to that! *Gott!* Less than the flies I crush with my hand, less than midges in the sunbeam!"

He suddenly gripped himself.

"But that is not now the important thing," he resumed, almost coldly. "Not that nor my shooting. Let us squarely the situation face. My proposal is so: that we join interests, and what you call see it through together; find our way through this place and those secrets learn of which I have spoken, if we can. And when that is done we will go our ways, to his own land each, to make use of them for our lands as each of us may. On my part I offer my knowledge—and it is very valuable Dr. Goodwin—and my training. You and Lieutenant O'Keefe do the same, and this man Olaf, what he can of his strength, for I do not think his usefulness lies in his brains, *nein.*"

"In effect, Goodwin," broke in Larry as I hesitated, "the professor's proposition is this: he wants to know what's going on here but he begins to realize it's no one man's job and beside we have the drop on him. We're three to his one, and we have all his hardware and cutlery. But also we can do better with him than without him—just as he can do better with us than without us. It's an even break—for a while. But once he gets that information he's looking for, then look out. You and Olaf and I are the wolves and the flies and the midges again—and the *strafing* will be about due. Nevertheless, with three to one against him, if he can get away with it he deserves to. I'm for taking him up, if you are."

There was almost a twinkle in von Hetzdorp's eyes.

"It is not just as I would have put it, perhaps," he said, "but in its skeleton he has right. Nor will I turn my hand against you while we are still in danger here. I pledge you my honor on this."

Larry laughed.

"All right, Professor," he grinned. "But there was once a certain—scrap of paper. I'll just keep the guns."

Von Hetzdorp bowed, imperturbably.

"And now," he said, "I will tell you what I know. I found the secret of the door mechanism even as you did, Dr. Goodwin. But by carelessness, my condensers were broken. I was forced to wait while I sent for others—and the waiting might be for months. I took certain precautions, and on the first night of this full moon I hid myself within the vault of Chau-ta-leur."

An involuntary thrill of admiration for the man went through me at the manifest heroism of this leap in the dark. I could see it reflected in Larry's face.

"I hid in the vault," continued von Hetzdorp, "and I saw that which comes from here come out. I waited—long hours. At last, when the moon was low, it returned—ecstatically—with a man, a native, in embrace enfolded. It passed through the door, and soon then the moon became low and the door closed.

"The next night more confidence was mine, yes. And after that which comes had gone, I looked through its open door. I said, 'It will not return for three hours. While it is away, why shall I not into its home go through the door it has left open?' So I went—even to here. I looked at the pillars of light and I tested the liquid of the Pool on which they fell. That liquid, Dr. Goodwin, is not water, and it is not any fluid known on earth." He handed me a small vial, its neck held in a long thong.

"Take this," he said, "and see."

WONDERINGLY, I took the bottle; dipped it down into the Pool. The liquid was extraordinarily light; seemed, in fact, to give the vial buoyancy. I held it to the light. It was striated, streaked, as though little living, pulsing veins ran through it. And its blueness even in the vial, held an intensity of luminousness.

"Radioactive," said von Hetzdorp. "Some liquid that is intensely radioactive, but what it is I know not at all. Upon the living skin it acts like radium raised to the *n*th power and with an element most mysterious added. The solution with which I treated him," he pointed to Huldricksson, "I had prepared before I came here, from certain information I had. It is largely salts of radium and its base is Loeb's formula for the neutralization of radium and X-ray burns. Taking this man at once, before the degeneration had become really active, I could negative it. But after two hours I could have done nothing."

He paused a moment.

"Next I studied the nature of these luminous walls. I concluded that whoever had made them, knew the secret of the Almighty's manufacture of light from the ether itself. Colossal! *Ja!* But the

substance of these blocks confines an atomic—how would you say—atomic manipulation, a conscious arrangement of electrons, light-emitting and perhaps indefinitely so. These blocks are lamps in which oil and wick are—electrons drawing light waves from ether itself! A Prometheus, indeed, this discoverer! *Nein?* Hardly had I concluded these investigations before my watch warned me to go. I went. That which comes forth returned—this time empty-handed.

"And the next night I did the same thing. Engrossed in research, I let the moments go by to the danger point, and scarcely was I replaced within the vault when the shining thing raced over the walls, and in its grip the woman and child——

"Then you come—and that is all. And now—what is it you know?"

Very briefly I went over my story. His eyes gleamed now and then, but he did not interrupt me.

"A great secret! A colossal secret!" he muttered, when I had ended. "We cannot leave it hidden."

"The first thing to do is to try the door," said Larry, matter of fact.

"There is no use, my young friend," assured von Hetzdorp mildly.

"Nevertheless we'll try," said Larry. We retraced our way through the winding tunnel to the end, but soon even O'Keefe saw that any idea of moving the slab from within was hopeless. We returned to the Chamber of the Pool. The pillars of light were fainter, and we knew that the moon was sinking. On the world outside before long dawn would be breaking. I began to feel thirst—and the blue semblance of water within the silvery rim seemed to glint mockingly as my eyes rested on it.

"Ja!" it was von Hetzdorp, reading my thoughts uncannily. *"Ja!* We will be thirsty. And it will be very bad for him of us who loses control and drinks of that, my friend. *Ja!"*

Larry threw back his shoulders as though shaking a burden from them.

"This place would give an angel of joy the willies," he said. "I suggest that we look around and find something that will take us somewhere. You can bet the people that built it had more ways of getting in than that once-a-month family entrance. Doc, you and Olaf take the left wall; the professor and I will take the right."

He loosened one of his automatics with a suggestive movement.

"After you, Professor," he bowed, politely, to the German. We parted and set forth.

The chamber widened out from the portal in what seemed to be the arc of an immense circle. The shining walls held a perceptible curve, and from this curvature I estimated that the roof was fully three hundred feet above us.

The floor was of smooth, mosaic-fitted blocks of a faintly yellow tinge. They were not light-emitting like the blocks that formed the walls. The radiance from these latter, I noted, had the peculiar quality of *thickening* a few yards from its source, and it was this that produced the effect of misty, veiled distances. As we walked, the seven columns of rays streaming down from the crystalline globes high above us waned steadily; the glow within the chamber lost is prismatic shimmer and became an even grey tone somewhat like moonlight in a thin cloud.

Now before us, out from the wall, jutted a low terrace. It was all of a pearly rose-colored stone, slender, graceful pillars of the same hue. The face of the terrace was about ten feet high, and all over it ran a bas-relief of what looked like short-trailing vines, surmounted by five stalks, on the tip of each of which was a flower.

WE passed along the terrace. It turned in an abrupt curve. I heard a hail, and there, fifty feet away, at the curving end of a wall identical with that where we stood, were Larry and von Hetzdorp. Obviously the left side of the chamber was a duplicate of that we had explored. We joined. In front of us the columned barriers ran back a hundred feet, forming an alcove. The end of this alcove was another wall of the same rose stone, but upon it the design of vines was much heavier.

We took a step forward—there was a gasp of awe from the Norseman, a guttural exclamation from von Hetzdorp. For on, or rather within, the wall before us, a great oval began to glow, waxed almost to a flame and then shone steadily out as though from behind it a light was streaming through the stone itself!

And within the roseate oval two flame-tipped shadows appeared, stood for a moment, and then seemed to float out upon its surface. The shadows wavered; the tips of flame that nimbused them with flickering points of vermilion pulsed outward, drew back, darted forth again, and once more withdrew themselves—and as they did so the shadows thickened—and suddenly there before us stood two figures!

One was a girl—a girl whose great eyes were golden as the fabled lilies of Kwan-Yung that were born of the kiss of the sun upon the amber goddess the demons of Lao-Tz'e carved for him; whose softly curved lips were red as the royal coral, and whose golden-brown hair reached to her knees!

And the second was a gigantic frog—*a woman* frog, head helmeted with carapace of shell around which a fillet of brilliant yellow jewels shone; enormous round eyes of blue circled with a broad iris of green; monstrous body of banded orange and white girdled with strand upon strand of the flashing yellow gems! six feet high if an inch, and with one webbed paw of its short, powerfully muscled forelegs resting upon the white shoulder of the golden-eyed girl!

Moments must have passed as we stood in stark amazement, gazing at that incredible apparition. The two figures, although as real as any of those who stood beside me, unphantomlike as it is possible to be, had a distinct suggestion of—projection.

They were there before us—golden-eyed girl and grotesque frog-woman—complete in every line and curve; and still it was as though their bodies passed back through distances; as though, to try to express the wellnigh inexpressible, the two shapes we were looking upon were the end of an infinite number stretching in fine linked chain far away, of which the eyes saw only the nearest, while in the brain

some faculty higher than sight recognized and registered the unseen others.

The gigantic eyes of the frog-woman took us all in—unwinkingly. Little glints of phosphorescence shone out within the metallic green of the outer iris ring. She stood upright, her great legs bowed; the monstrous slit of a mouth slightly open, revealing a row of white teeth sharp and pointed as lancets; the paw resting on the girl's shoulder, half covering its silken surface, and from its five webbed digits long yellow claws of polished horn glistening against the delicate texture of the flesh.

But if the frog-woman regarded us all, not so did the maiden of the rosy wall. Her eyes were fastened upon Larry, drinking him in with extraordinary intentness. She was tall, far over the average of woman, almost as tall, indeed, as O'Keefe himself; not more than twenty years old, if that, I thought. Abruptly she leaned forward, the golden eyes softened and grew tender; the red lips moved as though she were speaking.

Larry took a quick step, and his face was that of one who after countless births comes at last upon the twin soul lost to him for ages. The frog-woman turned her eyes upon the girl; her huge lips moved, and I knew that she was talking! The girl held out a warning hand to O'Keefe, and then raised it, resting each finger upon one of the five flowers of the carved vine close beside her. Once, twice, three times, she pressed upon the flower centres, and I noted that her hand was curiously long and slender, the digits like those wonderful tapering ones the painters we call the primitive gave to their Virgins.

Three times she pressed the flowers, and then looked intently at Larry once more. A slow, sweet smile curved the crimson lips. She stretched both hands out toward him again eagerly; a burning blush rose swiftly over white breasts and flowerlike face.

Like the clicking out of a cinematograph, the pulsing oval faded, and golden-eyed girl and frog-woman were gone!

And thus it was that Lakla, the handmaiden of the Silent Ones, and Larry O'Keefe first looked into each other's hearts!

Larry stood rapt, gazing at the stone.

"Eilidh," I heard him whisper; "Eilidh of the lips like the red, red rowan and the golden-brown hair!"

"Clearly of the Ranadae," said von Hetzdorp, "a development of the fossil Labyrinthodonts: you saw her teeth, *Ja?*"

"Ranadae, yes," I answered. "But from the Stegocephalia; of the order Ecaudata——"

Never such a complete indignation as was in O'Keefe's voice as he interrupted.

"What do you mean—fossils and Stego whatever it is?" he asked. "She was a girl, a wonder girl—a real girl, and Irish, or I'm not an O'Keefe!"

"We were talking about the frog-woman, Larry," I said, conciliatingly.

His eyes were wild as he regarded us.

"Say," he said, "if you two had been in the Garden of Eden when Eve took the apple, you wouldn't have had time to give her a look for counting the scales on the snake!"

He strode swiftly over to the wall. We followed. Larry paused, stretched his hand up to the flowers on which the tapering fingers of the golden-eyed girl had rested.

"It was here she put up her hand," he murmured. He pressed caressingly the carved calyxes, once, twice, a third time even as she had—and silently and softly the wall began to split; on each side a great stone pivoted slowly, and before us a portal stood, opening into a narrow corridor glowing with the same rosy lustre that had gleamed around the flame-tipped shadows!

"Have your gun ready, Olaf!" said Larry. "We follow Golden Eyes," he said to me.

"Follow?" I echoed stupidly.

"Follow!" he said. "She came to show us the way! Follow? I'd follow her through a thousand hells!"

And with Olaf at one end, O'Keefe at the other, both of them with automatics in hand, and von Hetzdorp and me between them, we stepped over the threshold.

AT our right, a few feet away, the passage ended abruptly in a square of polished stone, from which came faint rose radiance. The roof of the place was less than two feet over O'Keefe's head.

A yard at left of us lifted a four-foot high, gently curved barricade, stretching from wall to wall—and beyond it was blackness; an utter and appalling blackness that seemed to gather itself from infinite depths. The rose-glow in which we stood was cut off by that blackness as though it had substance; it shimmered out to meet it, and was checked as though by a blow; indeed, so strong was the suggestion of sinister, straining force within the rayless opacity that I shrank back, and von Hetzdorp with me. Not so O'Keefe. Olaf beside him, he strode to the wall and peered over. He beckoned us.

"Flash your pocket-light down there," he said to me, pointing into the thick darkness below us. The little electric circle quivered down as though afraid, and came to rest upon a surface that resembled nothing so much as clear, black ice. I ran the light across—here and there. The floor of the corridor was of a substance so smooth, so polished, that no man could have walked upon it; it sloped downward at a slowly increasing angle.

"We'd have to have non-skid chains and brakes on our feet to tackle that," mused Larry. Abstractedly he ran his hands over the edge on which he was leaning. Suddenly they hesitated and then gripped tightly.

"That's a queer one!" he exclaimed. His right palm was resting upon a rounded protuberance, on the side of which were three small circular indentations.

"A queer one—" he repeated—and pressed his fingers upon the circles.

There was a sharp click; the slabs that had opened to let us through swung swiftly together; a curiously rapid vibration thrilled through us, a wind arose and passed over our heads—a wind that grew and grew until it became a whistling shriek, then a roar and then a mighty humming, to which every atom in our bodies pulsed in rhythm painful almost to disintegration!

The rosy wall dwindled in a flash to a point of light and disappeared!

Wrapped in the clinging, impenetrable blackness we were racing, dropping, hurling at a frightful speed—where?

And ever that awful humming of the rushing wind and the lightning cleaving of the tangible dark—so, it came to me oddly, must the newly released soul race through the sheer blackness of outer space up to that Throne of Justice, where God sits high above all suns!

I felt von Hetzdorp creep close to me; gripped my nerve and flashed my pocket-light; saw Larry standing, peering, peering ahead, and Huldricksson, one strong arm around his shoulders, bracing him. And then the speed began to slacken.

Millions of miles, it seemed; below the sound of the unearthly hurricane I heard Larry's voice, thin and ghostlike, beneath its clamor.

"Got it!" shrilled the voice. "Got it! Don't worry!"

The wind died down to the roar, passed back into the whistling shriek and diminished to a steady whisper. In the comparative quiet O'Keefe's tones now came in normal volume.

"Some little shoot-the-chutes, what?" he shouted. "Say—if they had this at Coney Island or the Crystal Palace! Press all the way in these holes and she goes top-high. Diminish pressure—diminish speed. The curve of this—dashboard—here sends the wind shooting up over our heads—like a windshield. What's behind you?"

I flashed the light back. The mechanism on which we were ended in another wall exactly similar to that over which O'Keefe crouched.

"Well, we can't fall out, anyway," he laughed. "Wish to hell I knew where the brakes were! Look out!"

We dropped dizzily down an abrupt, seemingly endless slope; fell—fell as into an abyss—then shot abruptly out of the blackness into a throbbing green radiance. O'Keefe's fingers must have pressed down upon the controls, for we leaped forward almost with the speed of light. I caught a glimpse of luminous immensities on the verge of which we flew; of depths inconceivable, and flitting through the incredible spaces—gigantic shadows as of the wings of Israfel, which are so wide, say the Arabs, the world can cower under them like a nestling—and then—again the living blackness!

"What was that?" This from Larry, with the nearest approach to awe that he had yet shown.

"Trolldom!" croaked the voice of Olaf.

"Gott!" This from von Hetzdorp. "What a space!

"Have you considered, Dr. Goodwin," he went on after a pause, "a curious thing? We know, or, at least, is it not that nine out of ten astronomers believe, that the moon was hurled out of this same region we now call the Pacific when the earth was yet like molasses; almost molten, I should say. And is it not curious that that which comes from the Moon Chamber needs the moon-rays to bring it forth; is it not? And is it not significant again that the stone depends upon the moon for operating? *Ja!* And last—such a space in mother earth as we just glimpsed, how else could it have been torn but by some gigantic birth—like that of the moon? *Hein!* I do not put forward these as statements of fact—no! But as suggestions——"

I started; there was so much that this might explain—an unknown element that responded to the moon-rays in opening the moon door; the blue Pool with its weird radioactivity, and the force within it that reacted to the same light stream——

It was not inconceivable that a film had drawn over the world wound, a film of earth-flesh which drew itself over that colossal abyss after our planet had borne its satellite—that world womb did not close when her shining child sprang forth—it was possible; and all that we know of earth depth is four miles of her eight thousand.

What is there at the heart of earth? What of that radiant unknown element upon the moon, mount Tycho? What of that element unknown to us as part of earth which is seen only in the corona of the sun at eclipse and that we call coronium? Yet the earth is child of the sun as the moon is earth's daughter. And what of that other unknown element we find glowing green in the far-flung nebulæ—green as that we had just passed through—and that we call nebulium? Yet the sun is child of the nebulæ as the earth is child of the sun and the moon is child of earth.

And what miracles are there in coronium and nebulium which, as the child of nebula and sun, we inherit? Yes—and in Tycho's enigma which came from earth heart?

We were flashing down to earth heart! And what miracles were hidden there?

CHAPTER XII

The End of the Journey

"SAY, Doc!" It was Larry's voice flung back at me. "I was thinking about that frog. I think it was her pet. Damn me if I see any difference between a frog and a snake, and one of the nicest women I ever knew had two pet pythons that followed her around like kittens. Not such a devilish lot of choice between a frog and a snake—except on the side of the frog? What? Anyway, any pet that girl wants is hers, I don't care if it's a leaping twelve-toed lobster or a whale-bodied scorpion. Get me?"

By which I knew that our remarks upon the frog woman were still bothering O'Keefe.

"He thinks of foolish nothings like the foolish sailor!" grunted von Hetzdorp, acid contempt in his words. "What are their women to—this?" He swept out a hand and as though at a signal the car poised itself for an instant, then dipped, literally dipped down into sheer space; skimmed forward in what was clearly curved flight, rose as upon a sweeping up-grade—and then began swiftly to slacken its fearful speed.

Far ahead a point of light showed; grew steadily; we were within it—and softly all movement ceased. How acute had been the strain of our journey I did not realize until I tried to stand—and sank back, leg-muscles too shaky to bear my weight. The car rested in a slit in the centre of a smooth

walled chamber perhaps twenty feet square. The wall facing us was pierced by a low doorway through which we could see a flight of steps leading downward.

The light streamed through a small opening, the base of which was twice a tall man's height from the floor. A curving flight of broad, low steps led up to it. And now it came to my steadying brain that there was something puzzling, peculiar, strangely unfamiliar about this light. It was silvery, shaded faintly with a delicate blue and flushed lightly with a nacreous rose; but a rose that differed from that of the terraces of the Pool Chamber as the rose within the opal differs from that within the pearl. In it were tiny, gleaming points like the motes in a sunbeam, but sparkling white like the dust of diamonds, and with a quality of vibrant vitality; they were as though they were alive. The light cast no shadows!

A little breeze came through the oval and played about us. It was laden with what seemed the mingled breath of spice flowers and pines. It was curiously vivifying, and in it the diamonded atoms of the light shook and danced.

I stepped out of the car, the German following, and began to ascend the curved steps toward the opening, at the top of which stairs O'Keefe and Olaf now stood. As they looked out I saw both their faces change—Olaf's with awe, O'Keefe's with incredulous amaze. I hurried to their side.

At first all that I could see was space—a space filled with the same coruscating effulgence that pulsed about me. I glanced upward, obeying that instinctive impulse of earth folk that bids them seek within the sky for sources of light. There was no sky—at least no sky such as we know—all was a sparkling nebulosity rising into infinite distances as the azure above the day-world seems to fill all the heavens—through it ran pulsing waves and flashing javelin rays that were like shining shadows of the aurora echoes, octaves lower, of those brilliant arpeggios and chords that play about the poles. My eyes fell beneath its splendor; I stared outward.

Miles away, gigantic luminous cliffs sprang sheer from the limits of a lake whose waters were of milky opalescence. It was from these cliffs that the spangled radiance came, shimmering out from all their lustrous surfaces. To left and to right, as far as the eye could see, they stretched—and they vanished in the auroral nebulosity on high!

"Look at that!" exclaimed Larry. I followed his pointing finger. On the face of the shining wall, stretched between two colossal columns, hung an incredible veil; prismatic. gleaming with all the colors of the spectrum. It was like a web of rainbows woven by the fingers of the daughters of the Jinn. In front of it and a little at each side was a semicircular pier, or, better, a plaza of what appeared to be glistening, pale-yellow ivory. At each end of its half-circle clustered a few low-walled, rose-stone structures, each of them surmounted by a number of high, slender pinnacles.

We looked at each other, I think, a bit helplessly—and back again through the opening. We were standing, as I have said, at its base. The wall in which it was set was at least ten feet thick, and so, of course, all that we could see of that which was without were the distances that revealed themselves above the outer ledge of the oval.

"Let's take a look at what's under us," said Larry.

HE crept out upon the ledge and peered down, the rest of us following. A hundred yards beneath us stretched gardens that must have been like those of many-columned Iram, which the ancient Addite King had built for his pleasure ages before the deluge, and which Allah, so the Arab legend tells, took and hid from man, within the Sahara, beyond all hope of finding—jealous because they were more beautiful than his in paradise. Within them flowers and groves of laced, fernlike trees, pillared pavilions nestled.

The trunks of the trees were of emerald, of vermilion, and of azure-blue, and the blossoms, whose fragrance was born to us, shone like jewels. The graceful pillars were tinted delicately. I noted that the pavilions were double—in a way, two-storied—and that they were oddly splotched with circles, with squares, and with oblongs of—opacity; noted too that over many this opacity stretched like a roof; yet it did not seem material; rather was it—impenetrable shadow!

Down through this city of gardens ran a broad shining green thoroughfare, glistening like glass and spanned at regular intervals with graceful, arched bridges. The road flashed to a wide square, where rose, from a base of that same silvery stone that formed the lip of the Moon Pool, a Titanic structure of seven terraces; and along it flitted objects that bore a curious resemblance to the shell of the Nautilus. Within them were—human figures! And upon tree-bordered promenades on each side walked others!

Far to the right we caught the glint of another emerald-paved road.

And between the two the gardens grew sweetly down to the hither side of that opalescent water across which were the radiant cliffs and the curtain of mystery.

Thus it was that we first saw the city of the Dweller; blessed and accursed as no place on earth, or under or above earth has ever been—or, that force willing which some call God, ever again shall be!

"Gott!" whispered von Hetzdorp. "Incredible!"

"Trolldom!" gasped Olaf Huldricksson. "It is Trolldom!"

"Listen, Olaf!" said Larry. "Cut out that Trolldom stuff! There's no Trolldom, or fairies, outside Ireland. Get that! And this isn't Ireland. And, buck up, Professor!" This to von Hetzdorp. "What you see down there are people—*just plain people.* And wherever there's people is where *I* live. Get me?

"There's no way in but in—and no way out but out," said O'Keefe. "And there's the stairway. Eggs are eggs no matter how they're cooked—and people are just people, fellow travellers, no matter what dish they are in," he concluded. "Come on!"

With the three of us close behind him, he marched toward the entrance.

CHAPTER XIII

Yolara, Priestess of the Shining One

"YOU'D better have this handy, Doc." O'Keefe paused at the head of the stairway and handed me one of the automatics he had taken from von Hetzdorp.

"Shall I not have one also?" rather anxiously asked the latter.

"When you need it you'll get it," answered O'Keefe. "I'll tell you frankly, though, Professor, that you'll have to show me before I trust you with a gun. You shoot too straight—from cover."

The flash of anger in the German's eyes turned to a cold consideration.

"You say always just what is in your mind, Lieutenant O'Keefe," he mused. "*Ja*—that I shall remember!" Later I was to recall this odd observation—and von Hetzdorp was to remember indeed.

In single file, O'Keefe at the head and Olaf bringing up the rear, we passed through the portal. Before us dropped a circular shaft, into which the light from the chamber of the oval streamed liquidly; set in its sides the steps spiralled, and down them we went, cautiously. The stairway ended in a circular well; silent—with no trace of exit! The rounded stones joined each other evenly—hermetically. Carved on one of the slabs was one of the five flowered vines. I pressed my fingers upon the calyxes, even as Larry had within the Moon Chamber.

A crack—horizontal, four feet wide—appeared on the wall; widened, and as the sinking slab that made it dropped to the level of our eyes, we looked through a hundred-feet-long rift in the living rock! The stone fell steadily—and we saw that it was a Cyclopean wedge set within the slit of the passageway. It reached the level of our feet and stopped. At the far end of this tunnel, whose floor was the polished rock that had, a moment before, fitted hermetically into its roof, was a low, narrow triangular opening through which light streamed.

"Nowhere to go but out!" grinned Larry. "And I'll bet Golden Eyes is waiting for us with a taxi!" He stepped forward. We followed, slipping, sliding along the glassy surface; and I, for one, had a lively apprehension of what our fate would be should that enormous mass rise before we had emerged! We reached the end; crept out of the narrow triangle that was its exit.

We stood upon a wide ledge carpeted with a thick yellow moss. I looked behind—and clutched O'Keefe's arm. The door through which we had come had vanished! There was only a precipice of pale rock, on whose surfaces great patches of the amber moss hung; around whose base our ledge ran, and whose summits, if summits it had, were hidden, like the luminous cliffs, in the radiance above us.

"Nowhere to go but ahead—and Golden Eyes hasn't kept her date!" laughed O'Keefe—but somewhat grimly.

We walked a few yards along the ledge and, rounding a corner, faced the end of one of the slender bridges. From this vantage point the oddly shaped vehicles were plain, and we could see they were, indeed, like the shell of the Nautilus and elfinly beautiful. Their drivers sat high upon the forward whorl. Their bodies were piled high with cushions, upon which lay women half-swathed in gay silken webs. From the pavilioned gardens smaller channels of glistening green ran into the broad way, much as automobile runways do on earth; and in and out of them flashed the fairy shells.

There came a shout from one. Its occupants had glimpsed us. They pointed; others stopped and stared; one shell turned and sped up a runway—and quickly over the other side of the bridge came a score of men. They were dwarfed—none of them more than five feet high, prodigiously broad of shoulder, clearly enormously powerful.

"*Trolde!*" muttered Olaf, stepping beside O'Keefe, pistol swinging free in his hand.

But at the middle of the bridge the leader stopped, waved back his men, and came toward us alone, palms outstretched in the immemorial, universal gesture of truce. He paused, scanning us with manifest wonder; we returned the scrutiny with interest. The dwarf's face was as white as Olaf's—far whiter than those of the other three of us; the features clean-cut and noble, almost classical; the wide set eyes of a curious greenish grey and the black hair curling over his head like that on some old Greek statue.

Dwarfed though he was, there was no suggestion of deformity about him. The gigantic shoulders were covered with a loose green tunic that looked like fine linen. It was caught in at the waist by a broad girdle studded with what seemed to me amazonites. In it was thrust a long curved poniard resembling the Malaysian kris. His legs were swathed in the same green cloth as the upper garment. His feet were sandalled.

MY gaze returned to his face, and in it I found something subtly disturbing; an expression of half-malicious gaiety that underlay the wholly prepossessing features like a vague threat; a mocking deviltry that hinted at entire callousness to suffering or sorrow; something of the spirit that was vaguely alien and disquieting.

He spoke—and, to my surprise, enough of the words were familiar to enable me clearly to catch the meaning of the whole. They were Polynesian, the Polynesian of the Samoans which is its most ancient form, but in some indefinable way—archaic. Later I was to know that the tongue bore the same relation to the Polynesian of today as does *not* that of Chaucer, but of the Venerable Bede, to modern English. Nor was this to be so astonishing, when with the knowledge came the certainty that it was from it the language we call Polynesian sprang.

"From whence do you come, strangers—and how found you your way here?" said the green dwarf.

I waved my hand toward the cliff behind us. His eyes narrowed incredulously; he glanced at its drop, upon which even a mountain goat could not have made its way, and laughed.

"We came through the rock," I answered his thought. "And we come in peace," I added.

"And may peace walk with you," he said half-derisively—"if the Shining One wills it!"

He considered us again.

"Show me, strangers, where you came through the rock," he commanded. We led the way to where we had emerged from the well of the stairway.

"It was here," I said, tapping the cliff.

"But I see no opening," he said suavely.

"It closed behind us," I answered; and then, for the first time, realized how incredible the explanation sounded. The derisive gleam passed through his eyes again. But he drew his poniard and gravely sounded the rock.

"You give a strange turn to our speech," he said. "It sounds strange, indeed—as strange as your answers." He looked at us quizzically. "I wonder where you learned it! Well, all that you can explain to the *Afyo Maie.*" His head bowed and his arms swept out in a wide salaam. "Be pleased to come with me!" he ended abruptly.

"In peace?" I asked.

"In peace," he replied—then slowly—"with me at least."

"Oh, come on, Doc!" cried Larry. "As long as we're here let's see the sights. *Allons, mon vieux!*" he called gaily to the green dwarf. The latter, understanding the spirit, if not the words, looked at O'Keefe with a twinkle of approval; turned to the great Norseman and scanned him with admiration then reached out and squeezed one of his immense biceps.

"Lugur will welcome you, at least," he murmured as though to himself. He stood aside and waved a hand courteously, inviting us to pass. We crossed. At the base of the span one of the elfin shells was waiting.

Beyond, scores had gathered, their occupants evidently discussing us in much excitement. The green dwarf waved us to the piles of cushions and then threw himself beside us. The vehicle started off smoothly, the now silent throng making way, and swept down the green roadway at a terrific pace and wholly without vibration, toward the seven-terraced tower.

As we flew along I tried to discover the source of the power, but I could not—then. There was no sign of mechanism, but that the shell responded to some form of energy was certain—the driver grasping a small lever which seemed to control not only our speed, but our direction.

We turned abruptly and swept up a runway through one of the gardens, and stopped softly before a pillared pavilion. I saw now that these were much larger than I had thought. The structure to which we had been carried covered, I estimated, fully an acre. Oblong, with its slender, vari-colored columns spaced regularly, its walls were like the sliding screens of the Japanese—*shoji.*

The green dwarf hurried us up a flight of broad steps flanked by great carved serpents, winged and scaled. He stamped twice upon mosaicked stones between two of the pillars, and a screen rolled aside, revealing an immense hall scattered about with low divans on which lolled a dozen or more of the dwarfish men, dressed identically as he was.

They sauntered up to us leisurely; the surprised interest in their faces tempered by the same inhumanly gay malice that seemed to be characteristic of all these people we had as yet seen.

"The Afyo Maie awaits them, Rador," said one.

The green dwarf nodded, beckoned us, and led the way through the great hall and into a smaller chamber whose far side was covered with the opacity I had noted from the aerie of the cliff. I examined the—blackness—with lively interest.

It had neither substance nor texture; it was not matter—and yet it suggested solidity; an entire cessation, a complete absorption of light; an ebon veil at once immaterial and palpable. I stretched, involuntarily, my hand out toward it, and felt it quickly drawn back.

"Do you seek your end so soon?" whispered Rador. "But I forget—you do not know," he added. "On your life touch not the blackness, ever. It——"

He stopped, for abruptly in the density a portal appeared springing out of the shadow like a picture thrown by a lantern upon a screen. Through it was revealed a chamber filled with a soft, rosy glow. Rising from cushioned couches, a woman and a man regarded us, half leaning over a long, low table of what seemed polished jet, laden with flowers and unfamiliar fruits.

About the room—that part of it, at least, that I could see—were a few oddly shaped chairs of the same substance. On high, silvery tripods three immense globes stood, and it was from them that the rose glow emanated. At the side of the woman was a smaller globe whose roseate gleam was tempered by quivering waves of blue.

"Enter Rador with the strangers!" a clear, sweet voice called.

Rador bowed deeply and stood aside, motioning us to pass. We entered, the green dwarf behind us, and out of the corner of my eye I saw the doorway fade as abruptly as it had appeared and again the dense shadow fill its place.

"Come closer, strangers. Be not afraid!" commanded the bell-toned voice.

We approached.

The woman, sober scientist that I am, made the breath catch in my throat. Never had I seen a woman so beautiful as was Yolara of the Dweller's city—and none of so perilous a beauty. Her hair was of the color of the young tassels of the corn and coiled in a regal crown above her broad, white brows; her wide eyes were of grey that could change to a corn-flower blue and in anger deepen to purple; grey or blue, they had little laughing devils within them, but when the storm of anger darkened them—they were not laughing, no!

The silken webs that half covered, half revealed her did not hide the ivory whiteness of her flesh nor the sweet curve of shoulders and breasts. But for all her amazing beauty, she was—sinister! There was cruelty about the curving mouth, and in the music of her voice—not conscious cruelty, but the more terrifying, careless cruelty of nature itself.

The girl of the rose wall had been beautiful, yes! But her beauty was human, understandable. You could imagine her with a babe in her arms—but you could not so imagine this woman. About her loveliness hovered something unearthly. A sweet feminine echo of the Dweller was Yolara, the Dweller's priestess—and as gloriously, terrifyingly evil!

CHAPTER XIV

The Justice of Lora

AS I looked at her the man arose and made his way round the table toward us. For the first time my eyes took in Lugur. A few inches taller than the green dwarf, he was far broader, more filled with the suggestion of appalling strength.

The tremendous shoulders were four feet wide if an inch, tapering down to mighty thewed thighs. The muscles of his chest stood out beneath his tunic of red. Around his forehead shone a chaplet of bright blue stones, sparkling among the thick curls of his silver-ash hair.

Upon his face pride and ambition were written large—and power still larger. All the mockery, the malice, the hint of callous indifference that I had noted in the other dwarfish men were there, too—but intensified touched with the satanic.

The woman spoke again.

"Who are you strangers, and how came you here?" She turned to Rador. "Or is it that they do not understand our tongue?"

"One understands and speaks it—but very badly, O Yolara," answered the green dwarf.

"Speak, then, that one of you," she commanded.

But it was von Hetzdorp who found his voice first, and I marvelled at the fluency, so much greater than mine, with which he spoke.

"We came for different purposes. I to seek knowledge of a kind; he"—pointing to me—"of another. This man"—he looked at Olaf—"to find a wife and child."

The grey-blue eyes had been regarding O'Keefe steadily and with plainly increasing interest.

"And why did *you* come?" she asked him. "Nay—I would have him speak for himself, if he can," she stilled von Hetzdorp peremptorily.

When Larry spoke it was haltingly, in the tongue that was strange to him, searching for the proper words.

"I came to help these men—and because something I could not then understand called me, O lady whose eyes are like forest pools at dawn," he answered and even in the unfamiliar words there was a touch of the Irish brogue, and little merry lights danced in the eyes Larry had so apostrophized.

"I could find fault with your speech, but none with its burden," she said. "What forest pools are I know not, and the dawn has not shone upon the people of Lora these many *sais* of *laya*.* But I sense what you mean!"

The eyes deepened to blue as she regarded him. She smiled.

"Are there many like you in the world from which you come?" she asked softly. "Well, we soon shall——"

Lugur interrupted her almost rudely and glowering.

"Best we should know how they came here," he growled.

She darted a quick look at him, and again the little devils danced in her wondrous eyes.

"Yes, that is true," she said. "How came you here?"

Again it was von Hetzdorp who answered—slowly, considering every word.

"In the world above," he said, "there are ruins of cities not built by any of those who now dwell there. To us these places called, and we sought for knowledge of the wise ones who made them. We found a passageway. The way led us downward to a door in yonder cliff, and through it we came here."

"Then have you found what you sought!" spoke she. "For we are of those who built the cities. But this gateway in the rock—where is it?"

"After we passed, it closed upon us nor could we after find trace of it," answered von Hetzdorp.

The incredulity that had shown upon the face of the green dwarf fell upon theirs; on Lugur's it was clouded with furious anger.

He turned to Rador.

"I could find no opening, lord," said the green dwarf quickly.

And there was so fierce a fire in the eyes of Lugur as he swung back upon us that O'Keefe's hand slipped stealthily down toward his pistol.

"Best it is to speak truth to Yolara, priestess of the Shining One, and to Lugur, the Voice," he cried menacingly.

"It is the truth," I interposed. "We came down the passage. At its end was a carved vine, a vine of five flowers"—the fire died from the red dwarf's eyes, and I could have sworn to a swift pallor. "I

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*Later I was to fiund that Murian reckoning rested upon the extraordinary increased luminosity of the cliffs at the time of full moon on earth—this action, to my mind, being linked either with the effect of the light streaming globes upon the Moon Pool, whose source was in the shining cliffs, or else upon some mysterious affinity of their radiant element with the flood of mooonlight on earth—the latter, more probably, because even when the moon must have been clouded above, it made no difference in the phenomenon. Thirteen of these shinings-forth constituted a *laya*, one of them a *lat*. Ten was *sa;* ten times ten times ten a *said*, or thousand; ten times a thousand was a *sais*. A *sais* of *laya* was then literally ten thousand years. What we would call an hour was by them called a *va*. The whole time system was, of course, a mingling of time as it had been known to their remote, surface-dwelling ancestors, and the peculiar determining factors in the vast cavern.

Unquestionably there is a subtle difference between time as we know it and time in this subterranean land—its progress there being slower. This, however, is only in accord with the well-known doctrine of relativity, which predicates both space and time as necessary inventions of the human mind to orient itself to the conditions under which it finds itself. I tried often to measure this difference, but could never do so to my entire satisfaction. The closest I can come to it is to say that an hour of our time is the equivalent of an hour and five-eighths in Muria. For further information upon this matter of relativity the reader may consult any of the numerous books upon the subject.

W. T. G.

rested a hand upon these flowers, and a door opened. But when we had gone through it and turned, behind us was nothing but unbroken cliff. The door had vanished."

I had taken my cue from von Hetzdorp. If he had eliminated the episode of car and Moon Pool, he had good reason, I had no doubt; and I would be as cautious. And deep within me something cautioned me to say nothing of my quest; to stifle all thought of Throckmartin—something that warned, peremptorily, finally, as though it were a message from Throckmartin himself!

"A vine with five flowers!" exclaimed the red dwarf. "Was it like this, say?"

He thrust forward a long arm. Upon the thumb of the hand was an immense ring, set with a dull blue stone. Graven on the face of the jewel was the symbol of the rosy walls of the Moon Chamber that had opened to us their two portals. But cut over the vine were seven circles, one about each of the flowers and two larger ones covering, intersecting them.

"This is the same," I said, "but these were not there"—I indicated the circles.

The woman drew a deep breath and looked deep into Lugur's eyes.

"The sign of the Silent Ones!" he half whispered.

It was the woman who first recovered herself.

"The strangers are weary, Lugur," she said. "When they are rested they shall show us where the rocks opened."

I SENSED a subtle change in their attitude toward us; a new intentness; a doubt plainly tinged with apprehension. What was it they feared? Why had the symbol of the vine wrought the change? And who or what were the Silent Ones?

Yolara's eyes turned to Olaf, hardened, and grew cold grey. Subconsciously I had noticed that from the first the Norseman had been absorbed in his regard of the pair; had, indeed, never taken his gaze from them; had noticed, too, the priestess dart swift glances toward him.

He returned her scrutiny fearlessly, a touch of contempt in the clear eyes—like a child watching a snake which he did not dread, but whose danger he well knew.

Under that look Yolara stirred impatiently, sensing, I know, its meaning.

"Why do you look at me so?" she cried.

An expression of bewilderment passed over Olaf's face.

"I do not understand," he said in English.

I caught a quickly repressed gleam in O'Keefe's eyes. He knew, as I knew, that Olaf must have understood. But did von Hetzdorp?

Apparently he did not. But why was Olaf feigning ignorance?

"This man is a sailor from what we call the North," thus Larry haltingly. "He is crazed, I think. He tells a strange tale—of a something of cold fire that took his wife and babe. We found him wandering where we were. And because he is strong we brought him with us. That is all, O lady whose voice is sweeter than the honey of the wild bees!"

"A shape of cold fire?" she repeated.

"A shape of cold fire that whirled beneath the moon, with the sound of little bells," answered Larry, watching her intently.

She looked at Lugur and laughed.

"Then he, too, is fortunate," she said. "For he has come to the place of his something of cold fire—and tell him that he shall join his wife and child, in time; that *I* promise him."

Upon the Norseman's face there was no hint of comprehension, and at that moment I formed an entirely new opinion of Olaf's intelligence; for certainly it must have been a prodigious effort of the will, indeed, that enabled him, understanding, to control himself.

"What does she say?" he asked.

Larry repeated.

"Good!" said Olaf. "Good!"

He looked at Yolara with well-assumed gratitude. Lugur, who had been scanning his bulk, drew close. He felt the giant muscles which Huldricksson accommodatingly flexed for him.

"But he shall meet Valdor and Tahola before he sees those kin of his," he laughed mockingly. "And if he bests them—for reward—his wife and babe!"

A shudder, quickly repressed, shook the seaman's frame. The woman bent her supremely beautiful head.

"These two," she said, pointing to the German and to me, "seem to be men of learning. They may be useful. As for this man"—she smiled at Larry—"I would have him explain to me some things." She hesitated. "What 'hon-ey of 'e wild bees-s' is." Larry had spoken the words in English, and she was trying to repeat them. "As for this man, the sailor, do as you please with him, Lugur; always remembering that I have given my word that he shall join that wife and babe of his!" She laughed sweetly, sinisterly. "And now—take them, Rador—give them food and drink and let them rest till we shall call them again."

She stretched out a hand toward O'Keefe. The Irishman bowed low over it, raised it softly to his lips. There was a vicious hiss from Lugur; but Yolara regarded Larry with eyes now all tender blue.

"You please me," she whispered.

And the face of Lugur grew darker.

We turned to go. The rosy, azure-shot globe at her side suddenly dulled. From it came a faint bell sound as of chimes far away. She bent over it. It vibrated, and then its surface ran with little waves of dull color; from it came a whispering so low that I could not distinguish the words—if words they were.

She spoke to the red dwarf.

"They have brought the three who blasphemed the Shining One," she sad slowly. "Now it is in my mind to show these strangers the justice of Lora. What say you, Lugur?"

The red dwarf nodded, his eyes sparkling with a malicious anticipation.

The woman spoke again to the globe. "Bring them here!"

END OF PART I.

The MAN WHO DIED by PROXY

By Frank Gates

As Ivanoff turned to put the money in the safe, these curtains parted and a man with a sallow face, and the fierce, glaring eyes of a wolf stepped toward them. In each hand he held a revolver—covering both men.

HERE is a most unusual tale, with a most unusual ending. It may be classed as a scientific sort of O. Henry story that will not fail to arouse your interest and we gladly recommend it to your attention.

IF a negro could have turned white, Sam certainly would be a white man now," said Colonel Harold Preston, a prominent attorney, talking to his friend, Judge Paul.

They had stolen away at the close of a strenuous trial for a little relaxation, and were fishing the mountain streams. They had taken Colonel Preston's life-long servant, Sam, along with them. In turning a bend of the stream, they had suddenly come upon a large bear, and to make it all the more exciting, two little cubs were playing in the stream. None of the men had a gun or any means of protection, and Sam, who was in front, turned so quickly that he knocked the Judge completely off his feet. Taking two or three jumps, he suddenly dropped and in his fright he buried his face in the leaves, giving a shriek of terror which sounded through the woods like the piercing cry of a lost soul.

It was a toss-up as to whom this cry scared the most—Colonel Preston, the Judge, or the bears. With a fierce growl, the mother bear scampered off down the stream, followed by her cubs.

Although the shock had been rather sudden to the two men, they could not help but laugh at Sam's fright, and it took the solemn pledge of both men that there was no danger before they could get him up on his feet again—Colonel Preston assuring him—"Why, Sam, that bear would have had to walk all over us to get anywhere near you."

Sam replied, "Yas suh, Boss, but I'd just like to ask you a question: is I pale?"

The Colonel laughed. "I don't think you are exactly pale, Sam, but I never saw another human being with such terror on his face as you had when you saw that bear."

Turning to Judge Paul, he asked, "Did you, Judge?"

A look of deep thought came into the face of Judge Paul, and after a few moments he replied, "Y-e-s, once, when I met *The Man Who Died by Proxy.*" Then he went on: "Of course, you have heard of Felix Dzerzhinsky, the late Chief of the Secret Police of all Russia. He was known all over the world as the *'Soviet Monster.'*

"You know I was in the American Embassy a few years ago in Moscow, and in spite of all the rumors of terror the world was hearing of, none of them could compare with the horrors of this man's atrocities. He was a man whose boast it

was, never to have had a friend, and the power that he had over his fellow Soviet associates was greater than that of any dictator the world has ever known. The tortures which had long been banished from Europe were everywhere employed. In his service was a Chinese expert in the art (?) of torturing—some of his methods were unknown even in the Middle Ages.*

"By the way, I have a clipping in my pocket recopied from the Soviet newspapers in October, 1917. The number butchered in cold blood by the Revolutionary Tribunals at the request of Dzerzhinsky in five years was 1,572,718. To read the classifications of these victims is astounding. For instance, of Police Officers alone, 10,000; Doctors, 8,800; Professors and Teachers, 1,215; Land Owners, 12,950; Constabulary, 48,500; Intelligentsia and Middle class, 355,350; Peasants, 815,000; Army Officers, 54,000; Soldiers, 260,000. Not content with this, he had even caused to be put to death, 28 Bishops and 1,215 Priests. The article goes on to say that, although Dzerzhinsky had been busy up to the time of his death, no figures of later massacres are available.

"When the news of Dzerzhinsky's death a short time ago was printed in the newspapers, a sigh of relief came to us of the American Embassy, who had lived through those trying times. Here was a man who was reputed not to know the meaning of fear. His acquaintances knew him as one who feared neither God nor man.

"In the early part of my services in Moscow, I had the pleasure of meeting one of the finest men the world has ever produced—a man so gentle and kind, that in my entire four years at the Embassy, I never knew any one to speak evil of him. He was a Doctor Levervitch, and was conceded to be the leading Physician of Moscow, and the foremost authority in the entire medical world on poisons and their antidotes.

"Although Dr. Levervitch did not claim the friendship of Dzerzhinsky, he was the only man who ever received the confidence of this monster. If you remember, the cause of the mysterious death—that relieved down-trodden Russia of this fiend—was never explained.

"Dr. Levervitch's description of Dzerzhinsky was very interesting, especially as nobody in Russia ever discussed him when he was alive. It was said that any man, woman or child who offended him, suddenly dropped out of existence.

"FIVE months before Dzerzhinsky's death, a man by the name of Burton had come into Moscow from South Africa. At that time it was not definitely known just what was his nationality, but the first time we ever heard of him was when he sent a messenger to the American Embassy from the Russian Prison, stating that he wished to have the protection of the American Government for a fair trial, as he had been born an American.

"I went over to the Prison to see him, and when I inquired what this man was charged with, I was horrified to learn that it was murder in the first degree. I was informed that the Chief of the Secret Police—Dzerzhinsky—had personally made the capture and on his testimony there seemed to be no doubt of Burton's guilt.

"I was shown to his cell and told that I would be allowed as much time as I wished with him, but was also told that the evidence obtained by Dzerzhinsky was of such a nature that Burton's innocence could absolutely not be proven.

"As I stepped into the cell, a strong, fine-looking man of about thirty years of age arose to meet me, and although his appearance showed every indication of perfect health, his eyes had a frightened, twitching movement—indicating a man laboring under a great strain. Burton assured me that a letter addressed to a General Harry Kingsley, Chief Engineer of the Port Flattery Construction Company, Port Flattery, South Africa, would bring proof of his American citizenship.

"It appeared by his statement that something terrible had happened in his life, something he did not wish to speak about. Anyway, he made me understand that it was nothing criminal, but of such importance to him that he wished to go back to America immediately. He told me he had fallen in with a young Frenchman who had assured him that relief from his TERROR could be found in Paris. He had gone there and had called upon Dr. Emile De La Pine, who had informed him that his examination proved his case to be hopeless; that he had only five more months to live, but had further informed him that there might be a possible chance for some relief if he could consult with Dr. Levervitch of Moscow, who was reputed to be an authority on such cases.

"Burton lost no time in hastening to Moscow, but in getting off the train upon his arrival there, he found, to his consternation, that a thief had taken all of his money. He knew of but one man in Moscow to whom he could go—a banker by the name of Sergius Ivanoff. After a great deal of difficulty, he found the home of this man and was at last admitted to his library. Ivanoff greeted him with warm cordiality and insisted that he spend the night with him, stating that a client who was leaving the city, had left 50,000 rubles with him to be banked the next morning; and although he had notified Chief of Secret Police Dzerzhinsky, he told Burton that he would feel safer if he stayed in the house with him.

"Ivanoff then asked Burton if he was armed, and Burton produced a Colts revolver. At the back of the sumptuously furnished room, was a large bay window, reaching to the floor, and screened with heavy plush curtains. As Ivanoff turned to put the money in the safe, these curtains parted and a man with a sallow face, and the fierce, glaring eyes of a wolf stepped toward them. In each hand he held a revolver—covering both men. As Burton made a move for his gun, a cold, steely voice cried in English, "Hands up or you're dead." Then turning to Ivanoff, he said in Russian, thinking that Burton could not understand that language "This man," indicating Burton, "is a thief and has come to steal your money; give it to me and I will take care of it until tomorrow." As he finished speaking, he handed Ivanoff one of his cards. Then picking up Burton's gun he put it in

*NOTE—Following figures authentic, compiled from *"PARIS GAULOIS."*—[Author.]

his own pocket. Ivanoff thanked him and assured him of his gratitude for the exposé, but told him that he would keep the money himself, in his safe until morning. With a snarl like the growl of a wolf, this fiend took from his pocket Burton's revolver; seeing that it was loaded, he leveled it at Ivanoff, saying in English to make sure Burton would understand, 'I am Dzerzhinsky, who takes what he wants, and I am not only going to take that money, but I am going to hang your friend for your murder.'

"There was a flash and Ivanoff fell to the floor. Burton rushed to his friend's side; the assassin stepped to the window and blew a whistle. To the two officers who entered, Dzerzhinsky said, 'Arrest that man. His assistant escaped with the money. Take his gun with you; I was too late to save Ivanoff's life.'

"BURTON then stated that he was taken to the prison and was refused premission to see anyone until he had stated that he was an American citizen.

"I assured him that I would get into communication with his friends in South Africa as soon as possible. I also informed him that under the conditions that existed in Russia at this time, and with the powerful influence that was against him, it would be almost impossible to save him, as I could not see where we could produce any evidence that would verify the story as he had told it to me. Dzerzhinsky's word was law, and he would be sure to find some way to rush the trial through and a conviction was almost certain.

"On my return to the Embassy I wrote a letter to General Kingsley.

"Imagine my surprise three days later to hear that Burton had willingly allowed himself to be used for a blood transfusion. It appears that following my visit to Burton, one of the prison physicians had called to see him and had told him that for some unknown reason Dzerzhinsky seemed to be losing his strength and vitality, and this physician had told Dzerzhinsky that he would die unless he could have the infusion of blood from a strong and healthy man. This same physician offered Burton the proposition that if he would allow himself to be used for this blood transfusion, he would be given his liberty and a passport back to America; but we were informed the following day that Burton—in spite of his seeming good health—had died upon the operation table. Knowing Dzerzhinsky as we did, no comments were made upon this strange occurrence.

"That night a cablegram arrived from South Africa stating that Burton was an American citizen and that a letter of explanation was following. Three days later, we received a registered letter, bearing the most alarming information concerning Burton. Being aware of the confidence reposed in Dr. Levervitch by Dzerzhinsky, we sent for Dr. Levervitch and read to him the contents of this letter we had just received.

"It appeared from the letter that three years ago Burton, who was a graduate of the Philadelphia College of Engineering, had been employed to assist in the construction of a railroad extending into the interior of South Africa, and had gradually worked himself into the confidence of General Kingsley, until he had become Chief Assistant Engineer.

"Five months ago he had taken his staff of Engineers and a pack train and had gone into the mountains. Ten days later, he had come back to Port Flattery, and stated that he had been bitten by a *kajau*, which is an almost unknown snake, never growing over six inches in length, and of a golden, copperish color. The habitation of this snake is absolutely unknown; only on rare occasions had it been found beneath the body of a fever patient which had been dead for some time. Burton, in turning over the body of a native which he had come across during the construction of the railroad, had been bitten by this snake and he had hastened back to Port Flattery for relief.

"The natives told him that the victim of this poison would not show any signs of having been poisoned until five months had elapsed, and then he would die a slow but horrible death—the fingers and toes turning black and dropping from the body. It was the native's conviction that anyone infected by this poison would best hurl himself from a cliff and by so doing end his misery and allow his soul to escape its torment.

"As far as the writer of this letter could find out, a cure had never been known, and it was in the hopes of finding some relief that Burton had gone to Paris, and he presumed had gone from there to see Dr. Levervitch in Moscow.

"We inquired of Dr. Levervitch if he had been present at the time of this blood transfusion operation, and he had informed us that he then had thought it was strange that he had not even been requested to be there; and he further stated that he could not understand how a physician could have been so careless as to allow Burton to die under such a minor operation.

"LOOKING back, it was not hard to imagine Burton's feelings on being told to what use his blood transfusion was to be put; and knowing that even had he been given his liberty, he had only a short time to live, he had resolved that he would make this monster die by proxy—die for him. And he felt that he would at least be doing the world one last service by removing this fiend in human form—by sharing the death that had been intended for himself, with Dzerzhinsky.

"Dr. Levervitch requested that we allow him to send for Dzerzhinsky and inform him of the contents of the letter we had received.

"Even at any ordinary time a person would feel a chill creep over him when in the presence of this man, but that day everyone in the room seemed to feel an unaccountable horror come over them; Dr. Levervitch's voice trembled, as he commenced to read General Kingsley's letter. I noticed the bored look of cold disinterest in Dzerzhinsky's eyes as Dr. Levervitch began to read, but suddenly over that mask-like face of steel there dawned a look of terror such as I hope never to see again on human countenance. One of his hands was lying idly on the desk and as our eyes were

(*Continued on page* 179)

The TIME MACHINE

- By H.G. Wells -

Author of "The First Men in the Moon," "The New Accelerator," etc.

". . . the sightless eyes of the crouching figure of the white sphinx seemed to watch me. I stood, panting heavily, one hand on the lever. . . . Soon a little group of these exquisite creatures were about me. I felt soft little tentacles on my back and shoulders. They wanted to make sure I was real.

CHAPTER I

The Inventor

THE man who made the Time Machine—the man I shall call the Time Traveler—was well known in scientific circles a few years since, and the fact of his disappearance is also well known. He was a mathematician of peculiar subtlety, and one of our most conspicuous investigators in molecular physics. He did not confine himself to abstract science. Several ingenious, and one or two profitable, patents were his: very profitable they were, these last, as his handsome house at Richmond testified. To those who were his intimates, however, his scientific investigations were as nothing to his gift of speech. In the after-dinner hours he was ever a vivid and variegated talker, and at times his fantastic, often paradoxical, conceptions came so thick and close as to form one continuous discourse. At these times he was as unlike the popular conception of a scientific investigator as a man could be. His cheeks would flush, his eyes grow bright; and the stranger the ideas that sprang and crowded in his brain, the happier and the more animated would be his exposition.

Up to the last there was held at his house a kind of informal gathering, which it was my privilege to attend, and where, at one time or another, I have met most of our distinguished literary and scientific men. There was a plain dinner at seven. After that we would adjourn to a room of easy-chairs and little tables, and there, with libations of alcohol and reeking pipes, we would invoke the god. At first the conversation was mere fragmentary chatter, with some local *lacunae* of digestive silence; but toward nine or half-past nine, if the god was favorable, some particular topic would triumph by a kind of natural selection, and would become the common interest. So it was, I remember, on the last Thursday but one of all — the Thursday when I first heard of the Time Machine.

I had been jammed in a corner with a gentleman who shall be disguised as Filby. He had been running down Milton—the public neglects poor Filby's little verses shockingly; and as I could think of nothing but the relative status of Filby and the man he criticised, and was much too timid to discuss that, the arrival of that moment of fusion, when our several conversations were suddenly merged into a general discussion, was a great relief

"What's that nonsense?" said a well-known Medical Man, speaking across Filby to the Psychologist.

"He thinks," said the Psychologist, "that Time's only a kind of Space."

"It's not thinking," said the Time Traveler; "it's knowledge."

"Foppish affectation," said Filby, still harping upon his wrongs; but I feigned a great interest in this question of Space and Time.

"Kant——" began the Psychologist.

"Confound Kant!" said the Time Traveler. "I tell you I'm right. I've got experimental proof of it. I'm not a metaphysician." He addressed the Medical Man across the room, and so brought the whole company into his own circle. "It's the most promising departure in experimental work that has ever been made. It will simply revolutionize life. Heaven knows what life will be when I've carried the thing through."

"As long as it's not the water of immortality, I don't mind," said the distinguished Medical Man. "What is it?"

"Only a paradox," said the Psychologist.

The Time Traveler said nothing in reply, but smiled and began tapping his pipe upon the fender curb. This was the invariable presage of a dissertation.

"You have to admit that time is a spatial dimension," said the Psychologist, emboldened by immunity and addressing the Medical Man, "and then all sorts of remarkable consequences are found inevitable. Among others, that it becomes possible to travel about in time."

The Time Traveler chuckled. "You forget that I'm going to prove it experimentally."

"Let's have your experiment," said the Psychologist.

"I think we'd like the argument first," said Filby.

"It's this," said the Time Traveler. "You must follow me carefully. I shall have to controvert one or two ideas that are almost universally accepted. The geometry, for instance, they taught you at school is founded on a misconception."

"Is not that rather a large thing to expect us to begin upon?" said Filby.

"I do not mean to ask you to accept anything without reasonable ground for it. You will soon admit as much as I want from you. You know, of course, that a mathematical line, a line of thickness *nil*, has no real existence. They taught you that? Neither has a mathematical plane. These things are mere abstractions."

"That is all right," said the Psychologist.

"Nor, having only length, breadth, and thickness, can a cube have a real existence."

"There I object," said Filby. "Of course a solid body may exist. All real things——"

"So most people think. But wait a moment. Can an instantaneous cube exist?"

"Don't follow you," said Filby.

"Can a cube that does not last for any time at all, have a real existence?"

HOW will this earth of ours appear 100 years from now, 1,000 years from now, 100,000 years from now? No one, of course, knows. Suppose it were possible to build a machine that could project us into the future, a machine which, with the present-day knowledge of Einstein's science, is not as impossible as it might have appeared even a generation ago. Time, as the term is understood today, is but a dimension. It should, therefore, be possible to either go backwards or forwards into this dimension, the same as can be accomplished in any other dimension. H. G. Wells has attempted such a machine in his present story, and while fantastic in the extreme it may not be as fantastic a hundred years from now as it appears at present. The Time Machine is one of the classics of scientifiction, and is certainly one of Wells' most famous works.

It was becoming involved. Filby became pensive.

"Clearly," the Philosophical Inventor proceeded, "any real body must have extension in *four* directions: it must have Length, Breadth, Thickness, and—Duration. But through a natural infirmity of the flesh, which I will explain to you in a moment, we incline to overlook the fact. There are really four dimensions, three which we call the three planes of Space, and a fourth, Time. There is, however, a tendency to draw an unreal distinction between the former three dimensions and the latter, because it happens that our consciousness moves intermittently in one direction along the latter from the beginning to the end of our lives."

"That," said a Very Young Man, making spasmodic efforts to relight his cigar over the lamp: "that—very clear indeed."

"Now, it is very remarkable that this is so extensively overlooked," continued the Philosophical Inventor, with a slight accession of cheerfulness. "Really this is what is meant by the Fourth Dimension, though some people who talk about the Fourth Dimension do not know they mean it. It is only another way of looking at Time. *There is no difference between Time and any of the three dimensions of Space except that our consciousness moves along it.* But some foolish people have got hold of the wrong side of that idea. You have all heard what they have to say about this Fourth Dimension?"

"I have not," said the Provincial Mayor.

"It is simply this, That space, as our mathematicians have it, is spoken of as having three dimensions, which one may call Length, Breadth, and Thickness, and is always definable by reference to these lines, each at right angle to the others. But some philosophical people have been asking why *three dimensions particularly*—why not another direction at right angles to the other three?—and have even tried to construct a Four-Dimensional geometry. Professor Simon Newcomb was expounding this to the New York Mathematical Society only a month or so ago. You know how on a flat surface, which has only two dimensions, we can represent a figure of a Three-Dimensional solid, and similarly they think that by models of three dimensions they could represent one of four—if they could master the perspective of the thing. See?"

"I think so," murmured the Provincial Mayor; and, knitting his brows, he lapsed into an introspective state, his lips moving as one who repeats mystic words. "Yes, I think I see it now," he said after some time, brightening in a quite transitory manner.

"Well, I do not mind telling you I have been at work upon this geometry of Four Dimensions for some time. Some of my results are curious: for instance, here is a portrait of a man at eight years old, another at fifteen, another at seventeen, another at twenty-three, and so on. All these are evidently sections, as it were, Three-Dimensional representations of his Four-Dimensional being, which is a fixed and unalterable thing.

"SCIENTIFIC people," proceeded the Philosopher, after the pause required for the proper assimilation of this, "know very well that Time is only a kind of Space. Here is a popular scientific diagram, a weather record. This line I trace with my finger shows the movement of the barometer. Yesterday it was so high, yesterday night it fell, then this morning it rose again, and so gently upward to here. Surely the mercury did not trace this line in any of the dimensions of space generally recognized? But certainly it traced such a line, and that line, therefore, we must conclude, was along the Time Dimension."

"But," said the Medical Man, staring hard at a coal in the fire, "if Time is really only a fourth dimension of Space, why is it, and why has it always been, regarded as something different? And why cannot we move about in Time as we move about in the other dimensions of Space?"

The Philosophical Person smiled. "Are you so sure we can move freely in Space? Right and left we can go, backward and forward freely enough, and men always have done so. I admit we move freely in two dimensions. But now about up and down? Gravitation limits us there."

"Not exactly," said the Medical Man. "There are balloons."

"But before the balloons, save for spasmodic jumping and the inequalities of the surface, man had no freedom of vertical movement."

"Still they could move a little up and down," said the Medical Man.

"Easier, far easier, down than up."

"And you cannot move at all in Time. You cannot get away from the present moment."

"My dear sir, that is just where you are wrong. That is just where the whole world has gone wrong. We are always getting away from the present moment. Our mental existences, which are immaterial and have no dimensions, are passing along the Time Dimensions with a uniform velocity from the cradle to the grave. Just as we should travel *down* if we began our existence fifty miles above the earth's surface."

"But the great difficulty is this," interrupted the Psychologist: "You *can* move about in all directions of Space, but you cannot move about in Time."

"That is the germ of my great discovery. But you are wrong to say that we cannot move about in Time. For instance, if I am recalling an incident very vividly I go back to the instant of its occurrence; I become absent-minded, as you say. I jump back for a moment. Of course we have no means of staying back for any length of time any more than a savage or an animal has of staying six feet above the ground. But a civilized man is better off than the savage in this respect. He can go up against gravitation in a balloon, and why should we not hope that ultimately he may be able to stop or accelerate his drift along the Time Dimension; or even to turn about and travel the other way?"

"Oh, *this*," began Filby, "is all——"

"Why not?" said the Philosophical Inventor.

"It's against reason," said Filby.

"What reason?" said the Philosophical Inventor.

"You can show black is white by argument," said Filby, "but you will never convince me."

"Possibly not," said the Philosophical Inventor. "But now you begin to see the object of my investigations into the geometry of Four Dimensions.

Long ago I had a vague inkling of a machine——"

"To travel through Time!" said the Very Young Man.

"That shall travel indifferently in any direction of Space and Time, as the driver determines."

Filby contented himself with laughter.

"It would be remarkably convenient," the Psychologist suggested. "One might travel back and witness the battle of Hastings."

"Don't you think you would attract attention?" said the Medical Man. "Our ancestors had no great tolerance for anachronisms."

"One might get one's Greek from the very lips of Homer and Plato," the Very Young Man thought.

"In which case they would certainly plow you for the little-go.* The German scholars have improved Greek so much."

"Then, there is the future," said the Very Young Man. "Just think! One might invest all one's money, leave it to accumulate at interest, and hurry on ahead."

"To discover a society," said I, "erected on a strictly communistic basis."

"Of all the wild extravagant theories——" began the Psychologist.

"Yes, so it seemed to me, and so I never talked of it until——"

"Experimental verification!" cried I. "You are going to verify *that!*"

"The experiment!" cried Filby, who was getting brain-weary.

"Let's see your experiment, anyhow," said the Psychologist, "though it's all humbug, you know."

The Time Traveler smiled around at us. Then, still smiling faintly, and with his hands deep in his trousers pockets, he walked slowly out of the room, and we heard his slippers shuffling down the long passage to his laboratory.

The Psychologist looked at us. "I wonder what he's got?"

"Some sleight-of-hand trick or other," said the Medical Man, and Filby tried to tell us about a conjuror he had seen at Burslem, but before he had finished his preface the Time Traveler came back, and Filby's anecdote collapsed.

THE thing the Time Traveler held in his hand was a glittering metallic framework, scarcely larger than a small clock, and very delicately made. There was ivory in it, and some transparent crystalline substance. And now I must be explicit, for this that follows—unless his explanation is to be accepted—is an absolutely unaccountable thing. He took one of the small octagonal tables that were scattered about the room, and set it in front of the fire, with two legs on the hearthrug. On this table he placed the mechanism. Then he drew up a chair and sat down. The only other object on the table was a small shaded lamp, the bright light of which fell full upon the model. There were also perhaps a dozen candles about, two in brass candlesticks upon the mantel and several in sconces, so that the room was adequately illuminated. I sat in a low armchair nearest the fire, and I drew this forward so as to be almost between the Time Traveler and the fireplace. Filby sat behind him, looking over his shoulder. The Medical Man and the Rector watched him in profile from the right, the Psychologist from the left. We were all on the alert. It appears incredible to me that any kind of trick, however subtly conceived and however adroitly done, could have been played upon us under these conditions.

The Time Traveler looked at us and then at the mechanism.

"Well?" said the Psychologist.

"This little affair," said the Time Traveler, resting his elbows upon the table and pressing his hands together above the apparatus, "is only a model. It is my plan for a machine to travel through Time. You will notice that it looks singularly askew, and that there is an odd twinkling appearance about this bar, as though it was in some way unreal." He pointed to the part with his finger. "Also, here is one little white lever, and here is another."

The Medical Man got up out of his chair and peered into the thing. "It's beautifully made," he said.

"It took two years to make," retorted the Time Traveler. Then, when we had all done as the Medical Man, he said: "Now I want you clearly to understand that this lever, being pressed over, sends the machine gliding into the future, and this other reverses the motion. This saddle represents the seat of a time traveler. Presently I am going to press the lever, and off the machine will go. It will vanish, pass into future time, and disappear. Have a good look at the thing. Look at the table, too, and satisfy yourselves there is no trickery. I don't want to waste this model, and then be told I'm a quack."

There was a minute's pause perhaps. The psychologist seemed about to speak to me, but changed his mind. Then the Time Traveler put forth his finger toward the lever. "No," he said suddenly; "lend me your hand." And turning to the Psychologist, he took that individual's hand in his own and told him to put out his forefinger. So that it was the Psychologist himself who sent forth the model Time Machine on its interminable voyage. We all saw the lever turn. I am absolutely certain there was no trickery. There was a breath of wind, and the lamp flame jumped. One of the candles on the mantel was blown out, and the little machine suddenly swung round, became indistinct, was seen as a ghost for a second perhaps, as an eddy of faintly glittering brass and ivory; and it was gone—vanished! Save for the lamp the table was bare.

Everyone was silent for a minute. Then Filby said he was d——d.

The Psychologist recovered from his stupor, and suddenly looked under the table. At that the Time Traveler laughed cheerfully. "Well?" he said, with a reminiscence of the Psychologist. Then, getting up, he went to the tobacco jar on the mantel, and with his back to us began to fill his pipe.

We stared at each other.

"Look here," said the Medical Man, "are you in earnest about this? Do you seriously believe that that machine has traveled into Time?"

"Certainly," said the Time Traveler, stooping to light a spill at the fire. Then he turned, lighting his pipe, to look at the Psychologist's face. (The

*A public examination held in the English universities about the middle of the course of study.—EDITOR.

Psychologist, to show that he was not unhinged, helped himself to a cigar and tried to light it uncut.) "What is more, I have a big machine nearly finished in there,"—he indicated the laboratory,—"and when that is put together I mean to have a journey on my own account."

"You mean to say that that machine has traveled into the future?" said Filby.

"Into the future or the past—I don't, for certain, know which."

After an interval the Psychologist had an inspiration.

"It must have gone into the past if it has gone anywhere," he said.

"Why?" said the Time Traveler.

"Because I presume that it has not moved in space, and if it traveled into the future it would still be here all this time, since it must have traveled through this time."

"But," said I, "if it traveled into the past it would have been visible when we came first into this room; and last Thursday when we were here; and the Thursday before that; and so forth!"

"Serious objections," remarked the Rector with an air of impartiality, turning toward the Time Traveler.

"Not a bit," said the Time Traveler, and, to the Psychologist: "You think. *You* can explain that. It's presentation below the threshold, you know, diluted presentation."

"Of course," said the Psychologist, and reassured us. "That's a simple point in psychology. I should have thought of it. It's plain enough, and helps the paradox delightfully. We cannot see it, nor can we appreciate this machine, any more than we can the spoke of a wheel spinning, or a bullet flying through the air. If it is traveling through time fifty times or a hundred times faster than we are, if it gets through a minute while we get through a second, the impression it creates will of course be only one-fiftieth or one-hundredth of what it would make if it were not traveling in time. That's plain enough." He passed his hand through the space in which the machine had been. "You see?" he said laughing.

We sat and stared at the vacant table for a minute or so. Then the Time Traveler asked us what we thought of it all.

"It sounds plausible enough to-night," said the Medical Man; "but wait until to-morrow. Wait for the common sense of the morning."

"Would you like to see the Time Machine itself?" asked the Time Traveler. And therewith, taking the lamp in his hand, he led the way down the long, draughty corridor to his laboratory. I remember vividly the flickering light, his queer, broad head in silhouette, the dance of the shadows, how we all followed him, puzzled but incredulous, and how there in the laboratory we beheld a larger edition of the little mechanism which we had seen vanish from before our eyes. Parts were of nickel, parts of ivory, parts had certainly been filed or sawn out of rock crystal. The thing was generally complete, but the twisted crystalline bars lay unfinished upon the bench beside some sheets of drawings, and I took one up for a better look at it. Quartz it seemed to be.

"Look here," said the Medical Man, "are you perfectly serious? Or is this a trick—like that ghost you showed us last Christmas?"

"Upon that machine," said the Time Traveler, holding the lamp aloft, "I intend to explore Time. Is that plain? I was never more serious in my life."

CHAPTER II

The Time Traveler Returns

"I THINK that at that time none of us quite believed in the Time Machine. The fact is, the Time Traveler was one of those men who are too clever to be believed; you never felt that you saw all round him; you always suspected some subtle reserve, some ingenuity in ambush, behind his lucid frankness. Had Filby shown the model and explained the matter in the Time Traveler's words, we should have shown *him* far less skepticism. The point is, we should have seen his motives—a pork-butcher could understand Filby. But the Time Traveler had more than a touch of whim among his elements, and we distrusted him. Things that would have made the fame of a clever man seemed tricks in his hands. It is a mistake to do things too easily. The serious people who took him seriously never felt quite sure of his deportment; they were somehow aware that trusting their reputations for judgment with him was like furnishing a nursery with eggshell china. So I don't think any of us said very much about time traveling in the interval between that Thursday and the next, though its odd potentialities ran, no doubt, in most of our minds: its plausibility, that is, its practical incredibleness, the curious possibilities of anachronism and of utter confusion it suggested. For my own part, I was particularly preoccupied with the trick of the model. That I remember discussing with the Medical Man, whom I met on Friday at the Linnæan. He said he had seen a similar thing at Tübingen, and laid considerable stress on the blowing-out of the candle. But how the trick was done he could not explain.

The next Thursday I went again to Richmond—I suppose I was one of the Time Traveler's most constant guests—and, arriving late, found four or five men already assembled in his drawing room. The Medical Man was standing before the fire with a sheet of paper in one hand and his watch in the other. I looked round for the Time Traveler, and—

"It's half-past seven now," said the Medical Man. "I suppose we'd better have dinner?"

"Where's ——?" said I, naming our host.

"You've just come? It's rather odd. He's unavoidably detained. He asks me in his note to lead off with dinner at seven if he's not back. Says he'll explain when he comes."

"It seems a pity to let the dinner spoil," said the Editor of a well-known daily paper; and thereupon the Doctor rang the bell.

The Psychologist was the only person besides the Doctor and myself who had attended the previous dinner. The other men were Blank, the Editor afore-mentioned, a certain journalist, and another—a quiet, shy man with a beard—whom I didn't know, and who, as far as my observation went, never opened his mouth all the evening. There was some speculation at the dinner-table about the Time Traveler's absence, and I suggested time traveling,

in a half-jocular spirit. The Editor wanted that explained to him, and the Psychologist volunteered a wooden account of the "ingenious paradox and trick" we had witnessed that day week. He was in the midst of his exposition when the door from the corridor opened slowly and without noise. I was facing the door, and saw it first.

"Hallo!" I said. "At last!"

And the door opened wider, and the Time Traveler stood before us. I gave a cry of surprise.

"Good Heavens, man! what's the matter?" cried the Medical Man, who saw him next. And the whole tableful turned toward the door.

He was in an amazing plight. His coat was dusty and dirty, and smeared with green down the sleeves; his hair disordered, and as it seemed to me grayer—either with dust and dirt or because its color had actually faded. His face was ghastly pale; his chin had a brown cut on it—a cut half-healed; his expression was haggard and drawn, as by intense suffering. For a moment he hesitated in the doorway, as if he had been dazzled by the light. Then he came into the room. He walked with just such a limp as I have seen in footsore tramps. We stared at him in silence, expecting him to speak.

He said not a word, but came painfully to the table, and made a motion toward the wine. The Editor filled a glass of champagne and pushed it toward him. He drained it, and it seemed to do him good; for he looked round the table, and the ghost of his old smile flickered across his face.

"What on earth have you been up to, man?" said the Doctor.

The Time Traveler did not seem to hear. "Don't let me disturb you," he said, with a certain faltering articulation. "I'm all right." He stopped, held out his glass for more, and took it off at a draught. "That's good," he said. His eyes grew brighter, and a faint color came into his cheeks. His glance flickered over our faces with a certain dull approval, and then went round the warm and comfortable room. Then he spoke again, still, as it were, feeling his way among his words. "I'm going to wash and dress, and then I'll come down and explain things. Save me some of that mutton. I'm starving for a bit of meat."

He looked across at the Editor, who was a rare visitor, and hoped he was all right. The Editor began a question.

"Tell you presently," said the Time Traveler. "I'm—funny! Be all right in a minute."

HE put down his glass, and walked toward the staircase door. Again I remarked his lameness and the soft padding sound of his footfall, and standing up in my place I saw his feet as he went out. He had nothing on them but a pair of tattered, blood-stained socks. Then the door closed upon him. I had half a mind to follow, till I remembered how he detested any fuss about himself. For a minute, perhaps, my mind was wool gathering. Then, "Remarkable Behavior of an Eminent Scientist," I heard the Editor say, thinking (after his wont) in headlines. And this brought my attention back to the bright dinner table.

"What's the game?" said the Journalist. "Has he been doing the Amateur Cadger?* I don't follow."

I met the eye of the Psychologist, and read my own interpretation in his face. I thought of the Time Traveler limping painfully upstairs. I don't think anyone else had noticed his lameness.

The first to recover completely from his surprise was the Medical Man, who rang the bell—the Time Traveler hated to have servants waiting at dinner—for a hot plate. At that the Editor turned to his knife and fork with a grunt, and the Silent Man followed suit. The dinner was resumed. Conversation was exclamatory for a little while, with gaps of wonderment; and then the Editor got fervent in his curiosity.

"Does our friend eke out his modest income with a crossing, or has he his Nebuchadnezzer phases?" he inquired.

"I feel assured it's this business of the Time Machine," I said, and took up the Psychologist's account of our previous meeting.

The new guests were frankly incredulous. The Editor raised objections.

"What *was* this time traveling? A man couldn't cover himself with dust by rolling in a paradox, could he?"

And then, as the idea came home to him; he resorted to caricature. Hadn't they any clothes-brushes in the Future? The Journalist, too, would not believe at any price, and joined the Editor in the easy work of heaping ridicule on the whole thing. They were both the new kind of Journalist—very joyous, irreverent young men. "Our Special Correspondent in the Day After To-Morrow reports," the Journalist was saying—or rather shouting—when the Time Traveler came back. He was dressed in ordinary evening clothes, and nothing save his haggard look remained of the change that had startled me.

"I say," said the Editor hilariously, "these chaps here say you have been traveling into the middle of next week! Tell us all about little Rosebery, will you? What will you take for the lot?"

The Time Traveler came to the place reserved for him without a word. He smiled quietly, in his old way.

"Where's my mutton?" he said. "What a treat it is to stick a fork into meat again!"

"Story!" cried the Editor.

"Story be d——d!" said the Time Traveler. "I want something to eat. I won't say a word until I get some peptone into my arteries. Thanks! And the salt."

"One word," said I. "Have you been time traveling?"

"Yes," said the Time Traveler, with his mouth full, nodding his head.

"I'd give a shilling a line for a verbatim note," said the Editor. The Time Traveler pushed his glass toward the Silent Man and rang it with his finger nail; at which the Silent Man, who had been staring at his face, started convulsively, and poured him wine. The rest of the dinner was uncomfortable. For my own part, sudden questions kept on rising to my lips, and I dare say it was the same

* A Tramp.

with the others. The Journalist tried to relieve the tension by telling anecdotes of Hettie Potter. The Time Traveler devoted his attention to his dinner, and displayed the appetite of a tramp. The Medical Man smoked a cigarette, and watched the Time Traveler through his eyelashes. The Silent Man seemed even more clumsy than usual, and drank champagne with regularity and determination out of sheer nervousness. At last the Time Traveler pushed his plate away, and looked round us.

"I suppose I must apologize," he said. "I was simply starving. I've had a most amazing time." He reached out his hand for a cigar, and cut the end. "But come into the smoking room. It's too long a story to tell over greasy plates." And ringing the bell in passing, he led the way into the adjoining room.

"You have told Blank and Dash and Chose about the machine?" he said to me, leaning back in his easy chair and naming the three new guests.

"But the thing's a mere paradox," said the Editor.

"I can't argue to-night. I don't mind telling you the story, but I can't argue. I will," he went on, "tell you the story of what has happened to me, if you like, but you must refrain from interruptions. I want to tell it. Badly. Most of it will sound like lying. So be it! It's true—every word of it, all the same. I was in my laboratory at four o'clock, and since then—— I've lived eight days—such days as no human being ever lived before! I'm nearly worn out, but I shan't sleep till I've told this thing over to you. Then I shall go to bed. But no interruptions! Is it agreed?"

"Agreed!" said the Editor, and the rest of us echoed "Agreed!" And with that the Time Traveler began his story as I have set it forth. He sat back in his chair at first, and spoke like a weary man. Afterward he got more animated. In writing it down I feel with only too much keenness the inadequacy of pen and ink—and, above all, my own inadequacy—to express its quality. You read, I will suppose, attentively enough; but you cannot see the speaker's white, sincere face in the bright circle of the little lamp, nor hear the intonation of his voice. You cannot know how his expression followed the turns of his story! Most of us hearers were in shadow, for the candles in the smoking room had not been lighted, and only the face of the Journalist and the legs of the Silent Man from the knees downward were illuminated. At first we glanced now and again at each other. After a time we ceased to do that, and looked only at the Time Traveler's face.

CHAPTER III

The Story Begins

"I TOLD some of you last Thursday of the principles of the Time Machine, and showed you the actual thing itself, incomplete, in the workshop. There it is now, a little travel-worn, truly; and one of the ivory bars is cracked, and a brass rail bent; but the rest of it is sound enough. I expected to finish it on Friday; but on Friday, when the putting together was nearly done, I found that one of the nickel bars was exactly one inch too short, and this I had to get remade; so that the thing was not complete until this morning. It was at ten o'clock to-day that the first of all Time Machines began its carrer. I gave it a last tap, tried all the screws again, put one more drop of oil on the quartz rod, and sat myself in the saddle. I suppose a suicide who holds a pistol to his skull feels much the same wonder at what will come next as I felt then. I took the starting lever in one hand and the stopping one in the other, pressed the first, and almost immediately the second. I seemed to reel; I felt a nightmare sensation of falling; and, looking round, I saw the laboratory exactly as before. Had anything happened? For a moment I suspected that my intellect had tricked me. Then I noted the clock. A moment before, as it seemed, it had stood at a minute or so past ten; now it was nearly half-past three!

"I drew a breath, set my teeth, gripped the starting lever with both my hands, and went off with a thud. The laboratory got hazy and went dark. Mrs. Watchett came in, and walked, apparently without seeing me, toward the garden door. I suppose it took her a minute or so to traverse the place, but to me she seemed to shoot across the room like a rocket. I pressed the lever over to its extreme position. The night came like the turning out of a lamp, and in another moment came to-morrow. The laboratory grew faint and hazy, then fainter and ever fainter. To-morrow night came black, then day again, night again, day again, faster and faster still. An eddying murmur filled my ears and a strange, dumb confusedness descended on my mind.

"I am afraid I cannot convey the peculiar sensations of time-traveling. They are excessively unpleasant. There is a feeling exactly like that one has upon a switchback—of a helpless headlong motion! I felt the same horrible anticipation, too, of an imminent smash. As I put on pace, day followed night, like the flap, flap, flap of some rotating body. The dim suggestion of the laboratory seemed presently to fall away from me, and I saw the sun hopping swiftly across the sky, leaping it every minute, and every minute marking a day. I supposed the laboratory had been destroyed, and I had come into the open air. I had a dim impression of scaffolding, but I was already going too fast to be conscious of any moving things. The slowest snail that ever crawled dashed by too fast for me. The twinkling succession of darkness and light was excessively painful to the eye. Then in the intermittent darkness, I saw the moon spinning swiftly through her quarters from new to full, and had a faint glimpse of the circling stars. Presently, as I went on, still gaining velocity, the palpitation of night and day merged into one continuous grayness; the sky took on a wonderful deepness of blue, a splendid luminous color like that of early twilight; the jerking sun became a streak of fire, a brilliant arch in space, the moon a fainter fluctuating band; and I could see nothing of the stars, save now and then a brighter circle flickering in the blue.

"The landscape was misty and vague. I was still on the hillside upon which this house now stands, and the shoulder rose above me gray and dim. I saw trees growing and changing like puffs

of vapor, now brown, now green; they grew, spread, fluctuated, and passed away. I saw huge buildings rise up faint and fair, and pass like dreams. The whole surface of the earth seemed changing—melting and flowing under my eyes. The little hands upon the dials that registered my speed raced round faster and faster. Presently I noted that the sun belt swayed up and down, from solstice to solstice, in a minute or less, and that, consequently, my pace was over a year a minute; and minute by minute the white snow flashed across the world and vanished, and was followed by the bright, brief green of spring.

"THE unpleasant sensations of the start were less poignant now. They merged at last into a kind of hysterical exhilaration. I remarked, indeed, a clumsy swaying of the machine, for which I was unable to account. But my mind was too confused to attend to it, so with a kind of madness growing upon me I flung myself into futurity. At first I scarce thought of stopping, scarce thought of anything but these new sensations. But presently a fresh series of impressions grew up in my mind,—a certain curiosity, and therewith a certain dread,—until they at last took complete possession of me. What strange developments of humanity, what wonderful advances upon our rudimentary civilization, I thought, might not appear when I came to look nearly into the dim, elusive world that raced and fluctuated before my eyes! I saw great and splendid architectures rising about me, more massive than any buildings of our own time, and yet, as it seemed, built of glimmer and mist. I saw a richer green flow up the hillside, and remain there without any wintry intermission. Even through the veil of my confusion the earth seemed very fair. And so my mind came round to the business of stopping.

"The peculiar risk lay in the possibility of my finding some substance in the space which I, or the machine, occupied. So long as I traveled at a high velocity through time, this scarcely mattered: I was, so to speak, attenuated—was slipping like a vapor through the interstices of intervening substances! But to come to a stop involved the jamming of myself, molecule by molecule, into whatever lay in my way, meant bringing my atoms into such intimate contact with those of the obstacle that a profound chemical reaction—possibly a far-reaching explosion—would result, and blow myself and my apparatus out of the Rigid Universe—out of all possible dimensions—into the Unknown. This possibility had occurred to me again and again while I was making the machine; but then I had cheerfully accepted it as an unavoidable risk—one of the risks a man has got to take! Now the risk was inevitable, I no longer saw it in the same cheerful light. The fact is that, insensibly, the absolute strangeness of everything, the sickly jarring and swaying of the machine, above all the the feeling of prolonged falling, had absolutely upset my nerve. I told myself that I could never stop, and with a gust of petulance I resolved to stop forthwith. Like an impatient fool, I lugged over the lever, and incontinently the thing went reeling over, and I was flung headlong through the air.

"There was the sound of a clap of thunder in my ears. I may have been stunned for a moment. A pitiless hail was hissing round me, and I was sitting on soft turf in front of the overset machine. Everything still seemed gray, but presently I remarked that the confusion in my ears was gone. I looked around me. I was on what seemed to be a little lawn in a garden, surrounded by rhododendron bushes, and I noticed that their mauve and purple blossoms were dropping in a shower under the beating of hailstones. The rebounding, dancing hail hung in a little cloud over the machine, and drove along the ground like smoke. In a moment I was wet to the skin. 'Fine hospitality to a man,' said I, 'who has traveled innumerable years to see you!'

"Presently I thought what a fool I was to get wet. I stood up and looked around me. A colossal figure, carved apparently in some white stone, loomed indistinctly beyond the rhododendrons through the hazy downpour. But all else of the world was invisible.

"My sensations would be hard to describe. As the columns of hail grew thinner, I saw the white figure more distinctly. It was very large, for a a silver birch tree touched its shoulder. It was of white marble, in shape something like a winged sphinx, but the wings, instead of being carried vertically at the sides, were spread so that it seemed to hover. The pedestal, it appeared to me, was of bronze, and was thick with verdigris. It chanced that the face was toward me; the sightless eyes seemed to watch me; there was the faint shadow of a smile on the lips. It was greatly weatherworn, and that imparted an unpleasant suggestion of disease. I stood looking at it for a little space—half a minute, perhaps, or half an hour. It seemed to advance and to recede as the hail drove before it denser or thinner. At last I tore my eyes from it for a moment, and saw that the hail curtain had worn threadbare, and that the sky was lightening with the promise of the sun.

"I looked up again at the crouching white shape, and the full temerity of my voyage came suddenly upon me. What might appear when that hazy curtain was altogether withdrawn? What might not have happened to men? What if cruelty had grown into a common passion? What if in this interval the race had lost its manliness, and had developed into something inhuman, unsympathetic, and overwhelmingly powerful? I might seem some old-world savage animal, only the more dreadful and disgusting for our common likeness—a foul creature to be incontinently slain.

"Already I saw other vast shapes—huge buildings with intricate parapets and tall columns, with a wooded hillside dimly creeping in upon me through the lessening storm. I was seized with a panic fear. I turned frantically to the Time Machine, and strove hard to readjust it. As I did so the shafts of the sun smote through the thunderstorm. The gray downpour was swept aside and vanished like the trailing garments of a ghost. Above me, in the intense blue of the summer sky,

some faint brown shreds of clouds whirled into nothingness. The great buildings about me stood out clear and distinct, shining with the wet of the thunderstorm, and picked out in white by the unmelted hailstones piled along their courses. I felt naked in a strange world. I felt as perhaps a bird may feel in the clear air, knowing the hawk flies above and will swoop. My fear grew to a frenzy. I took a breathing space, set my teeth, and again grappled fiercely, wrist and knee, with the machine. It gave under my desperate onset and turned over. It struck my chin violently. One hand on the saddle, the other on the lever, I stood panting heavily in attitude to mount again.

"But with this recovery of a prompt retreat my courage recovered. I looked more curiously and less fearfully at this world of the remote future. In a circular opening, high up in the wall of the nearer house, I saw a group of figures clad in rich soft robes. They had seen me, and their faces were directed toward me.

"Then I heard voices approaching me. Coming through the bushes by the white sphinx were the heads and shoulders of men running. One of these emerged in a pathway leading straight to the little lawn upon which I stood with my machine. He was a slight creature—perhaps four feet high—clad in a purple tunic, girdled at the waist with a leather belt. Sandals or buskins—I could not clearly distinguish which—were on his feet; his legs were bare to the knees, and his head was bare. Noticing that, I noticed for the first time how warm the air was.

"He struck me as being a very beautiful and graceful creature, but indescribably frail. His flushed face reminded me of the more beautiful kind of consumptive—that hectic beauty of which we used to hear so much. At the sight of him I suddenly regained confidence. I took my hands from the machine.

CHAPTER IV

The Golden Age

"IN another moment we were standing face to face, I and this fragile thing out of futurity. He came straight up to me and laughed into my eyes. The absence of any sign of fear from his bearing struck me at once. Then he turned to the two others who were following him and spoke to them in a strange and very sweet and liquid tongue.

"There were others coming, and presently a little group of perhaps eight or ten of these exquisite creatures were about me. One of them addressed me. It came into my head, oddly enough, that my voice was too harsh and deep for them. So I shook my head, and pointing to my ears, shook it again. He came a step forward, hesitated, and then touched my hand. Then I felt other soft little tentacles upon my back and shoulders. They wanted to make sure I was real. There was nothing in this at all alarming. Indeed, there was something in these pretty little people that inspired confidence—a graceful gentleness, a certain childlike ease. And besides, they looked so frail that I could fancy myself flinging the whole dozen of them about like ninepins. But I made a sudden motion to warn them when I saw their little pink hands feeling at the Time Machine. Happily then, when it was not too late, I thought of a danger I had hitherto forgotten, and reaching over the bars of the machine I unscrewed the little levers that would set it in motion and put these in my pocket. Then I turned again to see what I could do in the way of communication.

"And then, looking more nearly into their features, I saw some further peculiarities in their Dresden china type of prettiness. Their hair, which was uniformly curly, came to a sharp end at the neck and cheek; there was not the faintest suggestion of it on the face, and their ears were singularly minute. The mouths were small, with bright red, rather thin lips, and the little chins ran to a point. The eyes were large and mild; and—this may seem egotism on my part—I fancied even then that there was a certain lack of the interest I might have expected in them.

"As they made no effort to communicate with me, but simply stood round me smiling and speaking in soft cooing notes to each other, I began the conversation. I pointed to the Time Machine and to myself. Then, hesitating for a moment how to express Time, I pointed to the sun. At once a quaintly pretty little figure in checkered purple and white, followed my gesture, and then astonished me by imitating the sound of thunder.

"For the moment I was staggered, though the import of his gesture was plain enough. The question had come into my mind abruptly: Were these creatures fools? You may hardly understand how it took me. You see I had always anticipated that the people of the year Eight Hundred Thousand odd would be incredibly in front of us in knowledge, art, everything. Then one of them suddenly asked me a question that showed him to be on the intellectual level of one of our five-year-old children—asked me, in fact, if I had come from the sun in a thunderstorm! It let loose the judgment I had suspended upon their clothes, their frail, light limbs, and fragile features. A flow of disappointment rushed across my mind. For a moment I felt that I had built the Time Machine in vain.

"I nodded, pointed to the sun, and gave them such a vivid rendering of a thunderclap as startled them. They all withdrew a pace or so and bowed. Then came one laughing toward me, carrying a chain of beautiful flowers, altogether new to me, and put it about my neck. The idea was received with melodious applause; and presently they were all running to and fro for flowers, and laughingly flinging them upon me until I was almost smothered with blossom. You who have never seen the like can scarcely imagine what delicate and wonderful flowers countless years of culture had created. Then someone suggested that their plaything should be exhibited in the nearest building, and so I was led past the sphinx of white marble, which had seemed to watch me all the while with a smile at my astonishment, toward a vast gray edifice of fretted stone. As I went with them the memory of my confident anticipations of a profoundly grave and intellectual posterity came, with irresistible merriment, to my mind.

"The building had a large entry and was altogether of colossal dimensions. I was naturally most occupied with the growing crowd of little people, and with the big open portals that yawned before me shadowy and mysterious. My general impression of the world I saw over their heads was of a tangled waste of beautiful bushes and flowers, a long neglected and yet weedless garden. I saw a number of tall spikes of strange white flowers, perhaps measuring a foot across the spread of the waxen petals. They grew scattered, as if wild, among the variegated shrubs, but, as I say, I did not examine them closely at this time. The Time Machine was left deserted on the turf among the rhododendrons.

"The arch of the doorway was richly carved, but naturally I did not observe the carving very narrowly, though I fancied I saw suggestions of old Phoenician decorations as I passed through, and it struck me that they were very badly broken and weather-worn. Several more brightly clad people met me in the doorway, and so we entered, I, dressed in dingy nineteenth century garments, looking grotesque enough, garlanded with flowers, and surrounded by an eddying mass of bright, soft-colored robes and shining white limbs, in a melodious whirl of laughter and laughing speech.

"THE big doorway opened into a proportionately great hall hung with brown. The roof was in shadow, and the windows, partially glazed with colored glass, and partially unglazed, admitted a tempered light. The floor was made up of huge blocks of some very hard white metal, not plates or slabs—blocks, and it was so much worn, as I judged by the going to and fro of past generations, as to be deeply channeled along the more frequented ways. Transverse to the length were innumerable tables made of slabs of polished stone, raised, perhaps, a foot from the floor, and upon these were heaps of fruits. Some I recognized as a kind of hypertrophied raspberry and orange, but for the most part they were strange.

"Between the tables were scattered a great number of cushions. Upon these my conductors seated themselves, signing for me to do likewise. With a pretty absence of ceremony they began to eat the fruit with their hands, flinging peel, and stalks, and so forth, into the round openings in the sides of the tables. I was not loth to follow their example, for I felt thirsty and hungry. As I did so I surveyed the hall at my leisure.

"And perhaps the thing that struck me most was its dilapidated look. The stained-glass windows, which displayed only a geometrical pattern, were broken in many places, and the curtains that hung across the lower end were thick with dust. And it caught my eye that the corner of the marble table near me was fractured. Nevertheless, the general effect was extremely rich and picturesque. There were, perhaps, a couple of hundred people dining in the hall, and most of them, seated as near to me as they could come, were watching me with interest, their little eyes shining over the fruit they were eating. All were clad in the same soft, and yet strong, silky material.

"Fruit, by the bye, was all their diet. These people of the remote future were strict vegetarians, and while I was with them, in spite of some carnal cravings, I had to be frugivorous also. Indeed, I found afterward that horses, cattle, sheep, dogs, had followed the ichthyosaurus into extinction. But the fruits were very delightful; one, in particular, that seemed to be in season all the time I was there,—a floury thing in a three-sided husk,—was especially good, and I made it my staple. At first I was puzzled by all these strange fruits, and by the strange flowers I saw, but later I began to perceive their import.

"However, I am telling you of my fruit dinner in the distant future now. So soon as my appetite was a little checked, I determined to make a resolute attempt to learn the speech of these new men of mine. Clearly that was the next thing to do. The fruits seemed a convenient thing to begin upon, and holding one of these up I began a series of interrogative sounds and gestures. I had some considerable difficulty in conveying my meaning. At first my efforts met with a stare of surprise or inextinguishable laughter, but presently a fair-haired little creature seemed to grasp my intention and repeated a name. They had to chatter and explain their business at great length to each other, and my first attempts to make their exquisite little sounds of the language caused an immense amount of genuine, if uncivil, amusement. However, I felt like a schoolmaster amid children, and persisted, and presently I had a score of noun substantives at least, at my command; and then I got to demonstrative pronouns, and even the verb 'to eat.' But it was slow work, and the little people soon tired and wanted to get away from my interrogations, so I determined, rather of necessity, to let them give their lessons in little doses when they felt inclined. And very little doses I found they were before long, for I never met people more indolent or more easily fatigued.

CHAPTER V

Sunset

"A QUEER thing I soon discovered about my little hosts, and that was their lack of interest. They would come to me with eager cries of astonishment, like children, but, like children, they would soon stop examining me, and wander away after some other toy. The dinner and my conversational beginnings ended, I noted for the first time that almost all those who had surrounded me at first were gone. It is odd, too, how speedily I came to disregard these little people. I went out through the portal into the sunlit world again as soon as my hunger was satisfied. I was continually meeting more of these men of the future, who would follow me a little distance, chatter and laugh about me, and, having smiled and gesticulated in a friendly way, leave me again to my own devises.

"The calm of evening was upon the world as I emerged from the great hall, and the scene was lit by the warm glow of the setting sun. At first things were very confusing. Everything was so entirely different from the world I had known—even the flowers. The big building I had left was

situated on the slope of a broad river valley, but the Thames had shifted, perhaps a mile from its present position. I resolved to mount the summit of a crest, possibly a mile and a half away, from which I could get a wider view of this our planet in the year 802,701, A.D. For that, I should explain, was the date the little dials of my machine recorded.

"As I walked I was watchful of every impression that could possibly help to explain the condition of ruinous splendor in which I found the world—for ruinous it was. A little way up the hill, for instance, was a great heap of granite, bound together by masses of aluminum, a vast labyrinth of precipitous walls and crumbled heaps, amid which were thick heaps of very beautiful pagoda-like plants—nettles possibly, but wonderfully tinted with brown about the leaves, and incapable of stinging. It was evidently the derelict remains of some vast structure, built to what end I could not determine. It was here that I was destined, at a later date, to have a very strange experience—the first intimation of a still stranger discovery—but of that I will speak in its proper place.

"Looking around, with a sudden thought, from a terrace on which I had rested for a while, I realized that there were no small houses to be seen. Apparently the single house, and possibly even the household, had vanished. Here and there among the greenery were palace-like buildings, but the house and the cottage, which form such characteristic features of our own English landscape, had disappeared.

"'Communism,' I said to myself.

"And on the heels of that came another thought. I looked at the half dozen little figures that were following me. Then, in a flash, I perceived that all had the same form of costume, the same soft hairless visage, and the same girlish rotundity of limb. It may seem strange, perhaps, that I had not noticed this before. But everything was so strange. Now, I saw the fact plainly enough. In costume, and in all the differences of texture and bearing that now mark off the sex from each other, these people of the future were alike. And the children seemed to my eyes to be but the miniatures of their parents. I judged then that children of that time were extremely precocious, physically at least, and I found afterward abundant verification of my opinion.

"Seeing the ease and security in which these people were living, I felt that this close resemblance of the sexes was, after all, what one would expect; for the strength of a man and the softness of a woman, the institution of the family, and the differentiation of occupations are mere militant necessities of an age of physical force. Where population is balanced and abundant, much child-bearing becomes an evil rather than a blessing to the State; where violence comes but rarely and offspring are secure, there is less necessity—indeed there is no necessity—of an efficient family, and the specialization of the sexes with reference to their children's needs disappears. We see some beginnings of this even in our own time, and in this future age it was complete. This, I must remind you, was my speculation at the time. Later I was to appreciate how far it fell short of the reality.

"While I was musing upon these things, my attention was attracted by a pretty little structure, like a well under a cupola. I thought in a transitory way of the oddness of wells still existing, and then resumed the thread of my speculations. There were no large buildings toward the top of the hill, and as my walking powers were evidently miraculous, I was presently left alone for the first time. With a strange sense of freedom and adventure I pushed up to the crest.

"There I found a seat of some yellow metal that I did not recognize, corroded in places with a kind of pinkish rust and half smothered in soft moss, the arm-rests cast and filed into the resemblance of griffins' heads. I sat down on it, and I surveyed the broad view of our old world under the sunset of that long day. It was as sweet and fair a view as I have ever seen The sun had already gone below the horizon and the west was flaming gold, touched with some horizontal bars of purple and crimson. Below was the valley of the Thames, in which the river lay like a band of burnished steel. I have already spoken of the great palaces dotted about among the variegated greenery, some in ruins and some still occupied. Here and there rose a white or silvery figure in the waste garden of the earth, here and there came the sharp vertical line of some cupola or obelisk. There were no hedges, no signs of proprietary rights, no evidences of agriculture; the whole earth had become a garden.

"So watching I began to put my interpretation upon the things I had seen, and as it shaped itself to me that evening, my interpretation was something in this way (afterward I found I had got only a half truth, or only a glimpse of one facet of the truth):

"IT seemed to me that I had happened upon humanity upon the wane. The ruddy sunset set me thinking of the sunset of mankind. For the first time I began to realize an odd consequence of the social effort in which we are at present engaged. And yet, come to think, it is a logical consequence enough. Strength is the outcome of need; security sets a premium on feebleness. The work of ameliorating the conditions of life—the true civilizing process that makes life more and more secure—had gone steadily on to a climax. One triumph of a united humanity over Nature had followed another. Things that are now mere dreams had become projects deliberately put in hand and carried forward. And the harvest was what I saw!

"After all, the sanitation and the agriculture of to-day are still in the rudimentary stage. The science of our time has attacked but a little department of the field of human disease, but, even so, it spreads its operations very steadily and persistently. Our agriculture and horticulture destroy just here and there a weed and cultivate perhaps a score or so of wholesome plants, leaving the greater number to fight out a balance as they can. We improve our favorite plants and animals

—and how few they are—gradually by selective breeding; now a new and better peach, now a seedless grape, now a sweeter and larger flower, now a more convenient breed of cattle. We improve them gradually, because our ideals are vague and tentative, and our knowledge is very limited; because Nature, too, is shy and slow in our clumsy hands. Some day all this will be better organized, and still better. That is the drift of the current in spite of eddies. The whole world will be intelligent, educated, and co-operating; things will move faster and faster toward the subjugation of Nature. In the end, wisely and carefully we shall readjust the balance of animal and vegetable life to suit our human needs.

"This adjustment, I say, must have been done, and done well: done indeed for all time, in the space of Time across which my machine had leaped. The air was free from gnats, the earth from weeds or fungi; everywhere were fruits and sweet and delightful flowers; brilliant butterflies flew hither and thither. The ideal of preventive medicine was attained. Diseases had been stamped out. I saw no evidence of any contagious diseases during all my stay. And I shall have to tell you later that even the processes of putrefaction and decay had been profoundly affected by these changes.

"Social triumphs, too, had been effected. I saw mankind housed in splendid shelters, gloriously clothed, and as yet I had found them engaged in no toil. There were no signs of struggle, neither social nor economical struggle. The shop, the advertisement, traffic, all that commerce which constitutes the body of our world, was gone. It was natural on that golden evening that I should jump at the idea of a social paradise.

"The difficulty of increasing population had been met, I guessed, and population had ceased to increase.

"But with this change in condition comes inevitably adaptations to the change. What, unless biological science is a mass of errors, is the cause of human intelligence and vigor? Hardship and freedom: conditions under which the active, strong, and subtle survive and the weaker go to the wall; conditions that put a premium upon the loyal alliance of capable men, upon self-restraint, patience, and decision. And the institution of the family, and the emotions that arise therein, the fierce jealousy, the tenderness for offspring, parental self-devotion, all found their justification and support in the imminent dangers of the young. *Now*, where are those imminent dangers? There is a sentiment arising, and it will grow, against connubial jealousy, against fierce maternity, against passion of all sorts; unnecessary things now, and things that make us uncomfortable, savage survivals, discords in a refined and pleasant life.

"I thought of the physical slightness of the people, their lack of intelligence, and those big abundant ruins, and it strengthened my belief in a perfect conquest of Nature. For after the battle comes quiet. Humanity had been strong, energetic, and intelligent, and had used all its abundant vitality to alter the conditions under which it lived. And now came the reaction of the altered conditions.

"Under the new conditions of perfect comfort and security, that restless energy, that with us is strength, would become weakness. Even in our own time certain tendencies and desires, once necessary to survival, are a constant source of failure. Physical courage and the love of battle, for instance, are no great help—may even be hindrances—to a civilized man. And in a state of physical balance and security, power, intellectual as well as physical, would be out of place. For countless years I judged there had been no danger of war or solitary violence, no danger from wild beasts, no wasting disease to require strength of constitution, no need of toil. For such a life, what we should call the weak are as well equipped as the strong, are, indeed, no longer weak. Better equipped indeed they are, for the strong would be fretted by an energy for which there was no outlet. No doubt the exquisite beauty of the buildings I saw was the outcome of the last surgings of the now purposeless energy of mankind before it settled down into perfect harmony with the conditions under which it lived—the flourish of that triumph which began the last great peace. This has ever been the fate of energy in security; it takes to art and to eroticism, and then come languor and decay.

"Even this artistic impetus would at last die away—had almost died in the Time I saw. To adorn themselves with flowers, to dance, to sing in the sunlight; so much was left of the artistic spirit, and no more. Even that would fade in the end into a contented inactivity. We are kept keen on the grindstone of pain and necessity, and it seemed to me that here was that hateful grindstone broken at last!

"As I stood there in the gathering dark I thought that in this simple explanation I had mastered the problem of the world—mastered the whole secret of these delicious people. Possibly the checks they had devised for the increase of population had succeeded too well, and their numbers had rather diminished than kept stationary. That would account for the abandoned ruins. Very simple was my explanation, and plausible enough—as most wrong theories are.

"As I stood there musing over this too perfect triumph of man, the full moon, yellow and gibbous, came up out of an overflow of silver light in the northeast. The bright little figures ceased to move about below, a noiseless owl flitted by, and I shivered with the chill of the night. I determined to descend and find where I could sleep.

"I looked for the building I knew. Then my eye traveled along to the figure of the white sphinx upon the pedestal of bronze, growing distinct as the light of the rising moon grew brighter. I could see the silver birch against it. There was the tangle of rhododendron bushes, black in the pale light, and there was the little lawn. I looked at the lawn again. A queer doubt chilled my complacency. 'No,' said I stoutly to myself, 'that was not the lawn.'

"But it *was* the lawn. For the white leprous face of the sphinx was toward it. Can you imagine

what I felt as this conviction came home to me? But you cannot. The Time Machine was gone!

"At once, like a lash across the face, came the possibility of losing my own age, of being left helpless in this strange new world. The bare thought of it was an actual physical sensation. I could feel it grip me at the throat and stop my breathing.

CHAPTER VI

The Machine Is Lost

"IN another moment I was in a passion of fear, and running with great, leaping strides down the slope. Once I fell headlong and cut my face. I lost no time in stanching the blood, but jumped up and ran on, with a warm trickle down my cheek and chin. All the time I ran I was saying to myself: 'They have moved it a little—pushed it under the bushes out of the way.' Nevertheless, I ran with all my might. All the time, with the certainty that sometimes comes with excessive dread, I knew that such assurance was folly, knew instinctively that the machine was removed out of my reach.

"My breath came with pain. I suppose I covered the whole distance, from the hill crest to the little lawn, two miles perhaps, in ten minutes. And I am not a young man. As I ran I cursed aloud at my confident folly in leaving the machine, wasting good breath thereby. I cried aloud, and none answered. Not a creature seemed to be stirring in that moonlit world.

"When I reached the lawn my worst fears were realized. Not a trace of the thing was to be seen. I felt faint and cold when I faced the empty space among the black tangle of bushes. I ran round it furiously, as if the thing might be hidden in a corner, and then stopped abruptly with my hands clutching my hair. Above me towered the sphinx upon the bronze pedestal, white, shining, leprous in the light of the rising moon. It seemed to smile in mockery of my dismay.

"I might have consoled myself by imagining the little people had put the mechanism in some shelter for me, had not I felt assured of their physical and intellectual inadequacy. That is what dismayed me; the sense of some hitherto unsuspected power through whose intervention my invention had vanished. Yet of one thing I felt assured: unless some other age had produced its exact duplicate, the machine could not have moved in Time. The attachment of the levers—I will show you the method later—prevented anyone from tampering with it in that way when they were removed. It had been moved, and was hid, only in Space. But, then, where could it be?

"I think I must have had a kind of frenzy. I remember running violently in and out among the moonlit bushes all round the sphinx, and startling some white animal that in the dim light I took for a small deer. I remember, too, late that night, beating the bushes with my clenched fists until my knuckles were gashed and bleeding from the broken twigs.

"Then, sobbing and raving in my anguish of mind, I went down to the great building of stone. The big hall was dark, silent, and deserted. I slipped on the uneven floor and fell over one of the malachite tables, almost breaking my shin. I lit a match and went on past the dusty curtains of which I have told you.

"There I found a second great hall covered with cushions, upon which perhaps a score or so of the little people were sleeping. I have no doubt they found my second appearance strange enough, coming suddenly out of the quiet darkness with inarticulate noises and the splutter and flare of a match. For they had forgotten about matches. 'Where is my Time Machine?' I began, bawling like an angry child, laying hands upon them and shaking them up together. It must have been very queer to them. Some laughed, most of them looked sorely frightened. When I saw them standing round me, it came into my head that I was doing as foolish a thing as it was possible for me to do under the circumstances, in trying to revive the sensation of fear. For reasoning from the daylight behavior I thought that fear must be forgotten.

"Abruptly I dashed down the match, and knocking one of the people over in my course, went blundering across the big dining hall again out under the moonlight. I heard cries of terror and their little feet running and stumbling this way and that. I do not remember all I did as the moon crept up the sky. I suppose it was the unexpected nature of my loss that maddened me. I felt hopelessly cut off from my own kind, a strange animal in an unknown world. I must have raved to and fro, screaming and crying upon God and Fate. I have a memory of horrible fatigue, as the long night of despair wore away, of looking in this impossible place and that, of groping among moonlit ruins and touching strange creatures in the black shadows; at last, of lying on the ground near the sphinx and weeping with absolute wretchedness, for my anger had left me, as I realized the folly of having left the machine. I had nothing left but misery.

"Then I slept, and when I woke again it was full day, and a couple of sparrows were hopping around me upon the turf within reach of my arm.

"I sat up in the freshness of the morning trying to remember how I had got there, and why I had such a profound sense of desertion and despair. Then things came clear in my mind. With the plain, reasonable daylight I could look my circumstances fairly in the face. I saw the wild folly of my frenzy overnight, and I could reason with myself.

"'SUPPOSE the worst,' said I, 'suppose the machine altogether lost — perhaps destroyed. It behooves me to be calm and patient, to learn the way of the people, to get a clear idea of the method of my loss and the means of getting materials and tools; so that in the end, perhaps, I may make another. That would be my only hope, a poor hope, perhaps, but better than despair. And, after all, it was a beautiful and curious world.

"'But probably the machine had only been taken away. Still, I must be calm and patient, find its hiding place, and recover it by force or cunning.' And with that I scrambled to my feet and

looked about me, wondering where I could bathe. I felt weary, stiff, and travel-soiled. The freshness of the morning made me desire an equal freshness. I had exhausted my emotion. Indeed, as I went about my business, I found myself wondering at my intense excitement overnight.

"That morning I made a careful examination of the ground about the little lawn. I wasted some time in futile questionings conveyed as well as I was able to such of the little people as came by. They all failed to understand my gestures—some were simply stolid; some thought it was a jest, and laughed at me. I had the hardest task in the world to keep my hands off their pretty, laughing faces. It was a foolish impulse, but the devil begotten of fear and blind anger was ill curbed, and still eager to take advantage of my perplexity. The turf gave better counsel. I found a groove ripped in it, about midway between the pedestal of the sphinx and the marks of my feet where, on arrival, I had struggled with the overturned machine. There were other signs of the removal of a heavy body about, of queer, narrow footprints like those I could imagine made by a sloth. This directed my closer attention to the pedestal. It was, as I think I have said, of bronze. It was not a mere block, but highly decorated with deep-framed panels on either side. I went and rapped at these. The pedestal was hollow. Examining the panels with care, I found them discontinuous with the frames. There were no handles or keyholes, but possibly the panels, if they were doors, as I supposed, opened from within. One thing was clear enough to my mind. It took no very great mental effort to infer that my Time Machine was inside that pedestal. But how it got there was a different problem.

"I saw the heads of two orange-clad people coming through the bushes and under some blossom-covered apple trees toward me. I turned, smiling, to them, and beckoned them to me. They came, and then, pointing to the bronze pedestal, I tried to intimate my wish to open it. But at my first gesture toward this, they behaved very oddly. I don't know how to convey their expression to you. Suppose you were to use a grossly improper gesture to a delicate minded woman—it is how she would look. They went off as if they had received the last possible insult.

"However, I wanted access to the Time Machine; so I tried a sweet-looking little chap in white next, with exactly the same result. Somehow, his manner made me ashamed of myself. But, as I say, I wanted the Time Machine. I tried one more. As he turned off like the others, my temper got the better of me. In three strides I was after him, had him by the loose part of his robe round the neck, and began dragging him toward the sphinx. Then I saw the horror and repugnance of his face, and all of a sudden I let him go.

"But I was not beaten yet. I banged with my fist at the bronze panels. I thought I heard something stir inside—to be explicit, I thought I heard a sound like a chuckle—but I must have been mistaken. Then I got a big pebble from the river, and came and hammered till I had flattened a coil in the decorations, and the verdigris came off in powdery flakes. The delicate little people must have heard me hammering in gusty outbreaks a mile away on either hand, but nothing came of it. I saw a crowd of them upon the slopes, looking furtively at me. At last, hot and tired, I sat down to watch the place. But I was too restless to watch long, and, besides, I am too Occidental for a long vigil. I could work at a problem for years, but to wait inactive for twenty-four hours—that is another matter.

"I got up after a time, and began walking aimlessly through the bushes toward the hill again.

"'Patience,' said I to myself. 'If you want your machine again, you must leave that sphinx alone. If they mean to take your machine away, it's little good your wrecking their bronze panels, and if they don't, you will get it back so soon as you can ask for it. To sit among all those unknown things before a puzzle like that is hopeless. That way lies monomania. Face this world. Learn its ways; watch it; be careful of too hasty guesses at its meaning. In the end you will find clews to it all.'

"Then suddenly the humor of the situation came into my mind: the thought of the years I had spent in study and toil to get into the future age, and now my passion of anxiety to get out of it. I had made myself the most complicated and the most hopeless trap that ever a man devised. Although it was at my own expense, I could not help myself. I laughed aloud.

"Going through the big palace it seemed to me that the little people avoided me. It may have been my fancy, or it may have had something to do with my hammering at the gates of bronze. Yet I felt tolerably sure of the avoidance. I was careful, however, to show no concern, and to abstain from any pursuit of them, and in the course of a day or two things got back to the old footing.

CHAPTER VII

The Strange Animal

"I MADE what progress I could in the language, and in addition I pushed my explorations here and there. Either I missed some subtle point or their language was excessively simple, almost exclusively composed of concrete substantives and verbs. There seemed to be few, if any, abstract terms, or little use of figurative language. Their sentences were usually simple and of two words, and I failed to convey or understand any but the simplest propositions. I determined to put the thought of my Time Machine, and the mystery of the bronze doors under the sphinx, as much as possible in the corner of my memory until my growing knowledge would lead me back to them in a natural way. Yet a certain feeling you may understand tethered me in a circle of a few miles round the point of my arrival.

"So far as I could see, all the world displayed the same exuberant richness as the Thames valley. From every hill I climbed I saw the same abundance of splendid buildings, endlessly varied in material and style, the same clustering thickets

of evergreens, the same blossom-laden trees and tree ferns. Here and there water shone like silver, and beyond, the land rose into blue undulating hills and so faded into the serenity of the sky.

"A peculiar feature that presently attracted my attention was certain circular wells that appeared to sink to a profound depth. One lay by the path up the hill which I had followed during my first walk. These wells were rimmed with bronze, curiously wrought, and often protected by small cupolas from the rain. Sitting by the side of these, and peering down, I failed to see any gleam of water, and could catch no reflection from a lighted match. I heard a peculiar dull sound; thud, thud, thud, like the beating of some big engine, and I discovered from the flaring of the match that a steady current of air set down the shaft.

"Moreover, I carelessly threw a scrap of paper into the throat of the well, and instead of fluttering slowly down, it was at once sucked swiftly out of sight. After a time, too, I came to connect with these wells certain tall towers that stood here and there upon the hill slopes. Above these there was often apparent a peculiar flicker of the air, much as one sees it on a hot day above a sun-scorched beach.

"Putting these things together there certainly seemed to me a strong suggestion of an extensive system of subterraneous ventilation, though its true import was difficult to imagine. I was at first inclined to associate it with the sanitary apparatus of these people. It was the obvious suggestion of these things, but it was absolutely wrong.

"And here I must admit that I learned very little of drains, and bells, and modes of conveyance and the like conveniences during my time in this real future. In some of the fictitious visions of Utopias and coming times I have read, there is a vast amount of detail about building construction and social arrangements and so forth. But while such details are easy enough to obtain when the whole world lies in one's imagination, they are altogether inaccessible to a real traveler amid such realties as surrounded me. Conceive what tale of London a negro from Central Africa would take back to his tribe. What would he know of railway companies, of social movements, of telephone and telegraph wires, of parcels delivery company, and postal orders? And yet we at least would be willing enough to explain these things. And even of what we knew, how much could he make his untraveled friend believe? Then think how little is the gap between a negro and a man of our times, and how wide the interval between myself and the Golden Age people. I was sensible of much that was unseen, and which contributed to my comfort, but save for a general impression of automatic organization, I fear I can convey very little of the difference to your minds.

"In the matter of sepulcher, for instance, I could see no traces of crematoria or anything suggestive of tombs. But it occurred to me that possibly cemeteries or crematoria existed at some spot beyond the range of my explorations. This again was a question I deliberately put to myself, and upon which my curiosity was at first entirely defeated. Neither were there any old or infirm among them.

"I must confess that my satisfaction with my first theories at an automatic civilization and a decadent humanity did not endure. Yet I could think of none other. Let me put my difficulties. The several big palaces I had explored were mere living places, great dining halls and sleeping apartments. I could find no machinery, no appliances of any kind. Yet these people were clothed in pleasant fabrics that must at times need renewal, their sandals though without ornament were fairly complex specimens of metal work. Somehow such things must be made. And the little people displayed no vestige of the creative tendencies of our time. There were no shops, no workshops, no indications of importations from any other part of the earth. They spent all their time in playing gently, in bathing in the river, in making love in a half playful fashion, in eating fruit, and sleeping. I could not see how things were kept going.

"Then again about the Time Machine. Something, I knew not what, had taken it into the hollow pedestal of the sphinx. Why? For the life of me I could not imagine.

"Then there were those wells without water, those flickering pillars. I felt I missed a clew somewhere. I felt—how shall I say it? Suppose you found an inscription with sentences here and there in excellent plain English, and interpolated therewith others made up of words, even of letters, absolutely unknown to you. That was how the world of 802,701 presented itself to me on the third day of my stay.

"ON that day, too, I made a friend—of a sort. It happened that as I was watching some of the little people bathing in a shallow of the river, one of them was seized with cramp and began drifting down the stream. The main current of the stream ran rather swiftly there, but not too swiftly for even a moderate swimmer. It will give you an idea, therefore, of the strange want of ideas of these people, when I tell you that none made the slightest attempt to rescue the weakly, crying little creature who was drowning before their eyes.

"When I realized this I hurriedly slipped off my garments, and wading in from a point lower down, caught the poor little soul and brought her to land. "A little rubbing of the limbs soon brought her round, and I had the satisfaction of seeing that she was all right before I left her. I had got to such a low estimate of these little folks that I did not expect gratitude. In that, however, I was wrong.

"The incident happened in the morning. In the afternoon I met my little woman, as I believe it was, when I was returning toward my center from one of my explorations and she received me with cries of delight and presented me with a big garland of flowers—evidently prepared for me.

"The action took my imagination. Very possibly I had been feeling desolate. At any rate I did my best to display my appreciation of the gift.

"We were soon seated together in a little stone arbor, engaged in a conversation that was chiefly smiles.

"The little creature's friendliness affected me exactly as a child's might. We passed each other flowers and she kissed my hands. I did the same to hers. Then I tried conversation and found out her name was Weena, which, though I don't know

what it meant, somehow seemed appropriate enough. That was the beginning of a queer friendship that lasted altogether a week and ended—as I will tell you.

"She was exactly like a child. She wanted to be with me always. She tried to follow me everywhere, and it went to my heart to tire her out upon my next exploration and leave her behind at last exhausted, and calling after me rather plaintively. But the problems of the world had to be mastered. I had not, I said to myself, come into the future to carry on a miniature flirtation. Yet her distress when I left her was very great, her expostulations at the parting sometimes frantic, and I think altogether I had as much trouble as comfort from her affection. And yet she was, somehow, a very great comfort.

"I thought it was mere childish affection that made her cling to me. Until it was too late, I did not clearly know what I had inflicted upon her when I left her. Nor, until it was too late, did I clearly understand what she was to me. For the little doll of a creature, by merely seeming fond of me and showing in her weak futile way that she cared for me, presently gave my return to the neighborhood of the white sphinx, almost the feeling of coming home. I would watch for her little figure of white and gold so soon as I came over the hill.

"It was from her, too, that I learned that fear had not altogether left the world. She was fearless enough in the daylight, and she had the oddest confidence in me—for once in a foolish moment I made threatening grimaces at her, and she simply laughed at them. But she dreaded the dark, dreaded shadows, dreaded black things. Darkness to her was the one fearful thing. It was a singularly passionate dread, and it set me thinking and observing. I discovered then, among other things, that these little people gathered into the great houses after dark, and slept a number together. To enter upon them without a light was to put them into a tumult of apprehension. I never found one out of doors or one sleeping alone within doors after dark.

"Yet I was still such a blockhead that I missed the lessons of that fear, and in spite of Weena's evident distress insisted upon sleeping away from these slumbering heaps of humanity. It troubled her greatly, but usually her odd affection for me triumphed, and for five of the nights of our acquaintance, including the last night of all, she slept with her head pillowed beside mine. But my story slips away from me as I speak of her.

"It must have been on the night before I rescued Weena that I woke up about dawn. I had been restless, dreaming most disagreeably that I was drowned and that sea anemones were feeling over my face with their soft palps. I awoke with a start, and with an odd fancy that some grayish animal had just rushed out of the chamber in which I slept.

I tried to get to sleep again, but I felt restless and uncomfortable. It was that dim gray hour when things are just creeping out of the darkness, when everything is colorless and clear cut and yet unreal. I got up and went down into the great hall and out upon the flagstones in front of the palace. I thought I would make a virtue of necessity and see the sunrise.

"The moon was setting, and the dying moonlight and first pallor of dawn mingled together in a ghastly half-light. The bushes were inky black, the ground a somber gray, the sky colorless and cheerless. And up the hill slope I thought I saw ghosts. Three different times I scanned the slope I saw white figures. Twice I fancied I saw a solitary white ape-like creature running rather quickly up the hill, and once near the ruins I saw a group of two carrying some dark body. They moved hastily. I did not see what became of them. It seemed that they vanished among the bushes.

"The dawn was still indistinct, you must understand. I was feeling that chill, uncertain, early morning feeling you may have experienced. I doubted my eyes. As the eastern sky grew brighter, and the light of the day increased, and vivid coloring came back to the world once more, I scanned the view keenly, but I saw no confirmation of my white figures. They were mere creatures of the half light.

"'They must have been ghosts,' said I; 'I wonder whence they dated.'

"For a queer notion of Grant Allen's came into my head and amused me. If each generation dies and leaves ghosts, he argues, the world at last will get overcrowded with them. On that theory they would have become very thick in eight hundred thousand years from now, and it was no great wonder to see four all at once. But the jest was unsatisfactory, and I was thinking of these figures all the morning until the rescue of Weena drove the subject out of my head. I associated them in some indefinite way with the white animal I had startled in my first passionate search for the Time Machine. But Weena was a pleasant substitute for such a topic.

"THESE ghostly shapes were soon destined to take possession of my mind in a far more vivid fashion. I think I have said how much hotter than our own was the weather of this future age. I cannot account for it. It may be the sun was hotter, or else the earth was nearer the sun. It is usual to assume that the sun will go on cooling steadily in the future, but people unfamiliar with such speculations as those of the younger Darwin, forget that the planets must ultimately, one by one, fall back into the parent body. As these catastrophies occur the sun will blaze out again with renewed energy. It may be that some inner planet had suffered this fate. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that the sun was very much hotter than it is now.

"It was one very hot morning, my fourth morning, I think, as I was seeking a refuge from the heat and glare in a colossal ruin near the great house where I sheltered, that this remarkable incident occurred. Clambering among these heaps of masonry, I found a long narrow gallery, the end and side windows of which were blocked by fallen masses of masonry and which by contrast with the brilliance outside seemed at first impenetrably dark to me.

"I entered it groping, for the change from light to blackness made spots of color swim before me. Suddenly I halted spell-bound. A pair of eyes,

luminous by reflection against the daylight without, was watching me out of the obscurity!

"The old instinctive dread of wild animals came upon me. I clenched my hands and steadfastly looked into the glaring eyeballs. I feared to turn. Then the thought of the absolute security in which humanity appeared to be living came to my mind. Then I remembered that strange dread of the dark.

"Overcoming my fear to some extent, I advanced a step, and spoke. I will admit that my voice was hoarse and ill controlled. I put out my hand, and touched something soft.

"At once the eyes darted sideways, and something white ran past me. I turned, with my heart in my mouth, and saw a queer little ape-like figure, with the head held down in a peculiar manner, running across the sunlit space behind me. It blundered against a block of granite, staggered aside, and in a moment was hidden in a black shadow beneath another pile of ruined masonry.

"My impression of it was of course very imperfect. It was of a dull white color, and had strange, large, grayish-red eyes. There was some flaxen hair on its head and down its back. But, as I say, it went too fast for me to see distinctly. I cannot even say whether it ran on all fours, or only with its fore arms held very low.

"After a momentary hesitation I followed the creature into the second heap of ruins. I could not find it there at first, but after a time, in the profound obscurity I came upon one of those round, well-like openings, of which I have told you, half closed by a fallen pillar. A sudden thought came to me. Could the thing have vanished down the shaft? I lit a match, and, looking down, saw a small white moving figure, with large bright eyes, that regarded me steadfastly as it retreated.

"The thing made me shudder. It was like a human spider. It was clambering down the wall of the shaft, and now I noticed for the first time a number of metal projections for foot and hand, forming a kind of ladder down.

"Suddenly the light burned my fingers and fell out of my hand, going out as it dropped; and when I had lit another, the little monster had disappeared.

"I do not know how long I sat peering down the portentous well. Very slowly could I persuade myself that the thing I had seen was a man. But gradually the real truth dawned upon me; that man had not remained one species, but had differentiated into two distinct animals; that my graceful children of the upperworld were not the only descendants of the men of my generation, but that this bleached, nocturnal thing that had flashed before me, was also heir to our age.

"I thought of the flickering pillars, and of my theory of an underground ventilation. I began to suspect their true import.

"But what was this creature doing in my scheme of a perfectly balanced organization? How was it related to the indolent serenity of the beautiful overworld people? And what was hidden down below there? I sat upon the edge of the well, telling myself I had nothing to fear in descending, and that there I must go for the solution of my difficulties, and withal I was absolutely afraid to go down.

"As I hesitated, two of the beautiful upperworld people came running in their amorous sport, across the daylight into the shadow. One pursued the other, flinging flowers at her as he ran. They seemed disappointed when they found me with my arm against the overturned pillar, peering down the well. Apparently, it was considered bad form to notice these apertures, for when I pointed to it, and tried to frame a question about it in their tongue, they seemed distressed, and turned away. They were, however, interested by my matches, and I struck several to amuse them.

"However, all my attempts to woo them toward the subject I wanted failed; and presently I left them. I resolved to go back to Weena, and see what I could get from her.

"But my mind was already in revolution, my guesses and impressions slipping and sliding to a new adjustment. I had now the clew to these wells, to the ventilating towers, to the problem of the ghosts, and a hint, indeed, of the meaning of the bronze gates and the fate of the Time Machine. Vaguely indeed, there came a suggestion toward the economic problem that had puzzled me.

"HERE was the new view: Evidently this second species of man was subterranean. There were three circumstances in particular that made me think its rare emergence upon the surface was the outcome of long subterraneous habit. In the first place, the bleached appearance, common in most animals that live largely in the dark—the white fish of the Kentucky caves, for instance. Then the large eyes and their capacity for reflecting the light—a common feature of nocturnal eyes, witness the owl and the cat. And finally the evident confusion in the sunlight, the hasty flight toward dark shadow, and the carriage of the head while in the light, re-enforced the idea of an extremely sensitive retina.

"Beneath my feet, then, the earth must be tunneled out to an enormous extent, and in these caverns the new race lived. The presence of ventilating shafts and wells all along the hill slopes—everywhere, in fact, except along the river valley—showed how universally the ramification of the underworld extended.

"And it was natural to assume that it was in the underworld that the necessary work of the overworld was performed. This was so plausible that I accepted it unhesitatingly. From that I went on to assume how the splitting of the human species came about. I dare say you will anticipate what shape my theory took, though I soon felt it was still short of the truth of the case.

"But at first, starting from the problems of our own age, it seemed as clear as daylight to me that the gradual widening of the present merely temporary and social difference of the capitalist from the laborer was the key to the explanation. No doubt it will seem grotesque enough to you and wildly incredible, and yet even now there are circumstances that point in the way things have gone. There is a tendency plainly enough to utilize underground space for the less ornamental purposes of civilization; there is the Metropolitan Railway in London, for instance, and all these new electric

railways; there are subways, and underground workrooms, restaurants, and so forth. Evidently, I thought, this tendency had increased until industry had gradually lost sight of the day, going into larger and larger underground factories, in which the workers would spend an increasing amount of their time. Even now, an East End worker lives in such artificial conditions as practically to be cut off from the natural surface of the earth and the clear sky altogether.

"Then again, the exclusive tendency of richer people, due, no doubt, to the increasing refinement of their education and the widening gulf between them and the rude violence of the poor, is already leading to the closing of considerable portions of the surface of the country against these latter. About London, for instance, perhaps half the prettier country is shut up from such intrusion. And the same widening gulf, due to the length and expense of the higher educational process and the increased facilities for, and temptation toward, forming refined habits among the rich, will make that frequent exchange between class and class, that promotion and inter-marriage which at present retards the splitting of our species along the lines of social stratification, less and less frequent.

"So, in the end, you would have above ground the Haves, pursuing health, comfort, and beauty, and below ground the Have-nots; the workers, getting continually adapted to their labor. No doubt, once they were below ground, considerable rents would be charged for the ventilation of their caverns. Workers who struck work would starve or be suffocated for arrears of ventilator rent; workers who were so constituted as to be miserable and rebellious would die. In the end, if the balance was held permanent, the survivors would become as well adapted to the conditions of their subterranean life as the overworld people were to theirs, and as happy in their way. It seemed to me that the refined beauty of the overworld, and the etiolated pallor of the lower, followed naturally enough.

"The great triumph of humanity I had dreamed of now took a different shape in my mind. It had been no triumph of universal education and general co-operation, such as I had imagined at the first. Instead, I saw a real aristocracy, armed with a perfected science and working out to a logical conclusion the industrial system of to-day. The triumph of the overworld humanity had not been simply a triumph over nature, but a triumph over nature and their fellowmen.

"I must warn you this was my theory at the time. I had no convenient cicerone on the pattern of the Utopian books. My explanation may be absolutely wrong. I still think it the most plausible one. But even on this supposition the balanced civilization that was at last attained must have long since passed its zenith, and was now far gone in decay. The too perfect security of the overworld had led these to a slow movement of degeneration at last—to a general dwindling of size, strength, and intelligence. That I already saw clearly enough, but what had happened to the lower world I did not yet suspect. Yet from what I had seen of the Morlocks,—that, by the bye, was the name by which these creatures were called,—I could imagine the modification of the human type was far more profound in the underworld than among the Eloi, the beautiful races that I already knew.

"Then came some troublesome doubts. Why had the Morlocks taken my Time Machine? For I felt sure these underpeople had taken it. Why, too, if the Eloi were masters, could they not restore the thing to me? And why were the Eloi so afraid of the dark?

"I determined, as I have said, to question Weena about this underworld, but here again I was disappointed. At first she would not understand my questions, and then she refused to answer. She shivered as though the topic was unendurable. And when I pressed her, perhaps a little harshly, she burst into tears.

"They were the only tears I ever saw in that future age, except my own. When I saw them I ceased abruptly to trouble about the Morlocks, and was only concerned in driving these signs of her human inheritance out of her eyes again. And presently she was smiling and clapping her hands while I solemnly burnt a match.

CHAPTER VIII

The Morlocks

"IT may seem odd to you, but it was two days before I could follow up the clew of these Morlocks in what was manifestly the proper way, and descend into the well. I felt a peculiar shrinking from their pallid bodies. They were just the half-bleached color of the worms and things one sees preserved in spirit in a zoological museum. And they were cold to the touch. Probably my shrinking was largely due to the sympathetic influence of the Eloi, whose disgust of the Morlocks I now began to appreciate.

"The next night I did not sleep very well. Possibly my health was a little disordered. I was oppressed with doubt and perplexity. Once or twice I had a feeling of intense fear for which I could perceive no definite reason. I remember creeping noiselessly into the great hall where the little people were sleeping in the moonlight—that night it was that Weena was among them—and feeling reassured by their presence. It occurred to me even then that when in the course of a few days the moon passed through its last quarter and the nights became dark, the appearance of these unpleasant creatures from below, these whitened Lemurs, these new vermin that had replaced the old, might be more abundant.

"On both these days I had the restless feeling of one who shirks an inevitable duty. I felt assured that the Time Machine was only to be recovered by boldly penetrating these subterranean mysteries. Yet I could not face it. If I had only had a companion it would have been different. But I was so horribly alone, and even to clamber down into the darkness of the well appalled me.

"I don't know if you will understand my feeling, but I never felt quite safe at my back.

"It was this restless feeling, perhaps, that drove me further than I had hitherto gone in my exploring expeditions. Going to the southwestward toward the rising country that is now called Combe Wood, I observed far off, in the direction of nine-

teenth century Banstead, a vast green pile, of a different character from any I had hitherto seen. It was larger than even the largest of the palaces or ruins I knew, and the facade appeared to me Oriental in its character. The face of it had the luster as well as the pale green tint, a kind of bluish green, of a certain type of Chinese porcelain. The difference in appearance in the building suggested a difference in its use. I was minded to push on and explore it. But the day was growing late and I had come upon the sight of the place after a long and tiring circuit. I resolved to postpone this examination for the following day, and returned to the welcome and caresses of little Weena.

"But the next morning I was in a mood of remorse for my hesitation in descending the well and facing the Morlocks in their caverns. I perceived my curiosity regarding this great pile of Green Porcelain was a mere self-deception to shirk the experience I dreaded by another day. I resolved I would make the descent without further waste of time, and started out in the early morning toward a well near the ruins of granite and aluminum.

"Little Weena ran by my side. She followed me to the well dancing, but when she saw me lean over the mouth and look downward, she seemed strangely disconcerted.

"'Good-by, little Weena,' said I, kissing her, and then putting her down I began to feel over the parapet for the climbing hooks—rather hastily, for I feared my courage might leak away.

"At first Weena watched me in amazement, and then she gave a most piteous cry, and running to me began to pull at me with her little hands. I think her opposition nerved me rather to proceed. I shook her off, perhaps a little roughly, and in another moment I was in the throat of the well.

"I saw her agonized face over the parapet, and smiled to reassure her. Then I had to look down at the unstable hooks by which I hung.

"I had to clamber down a shaft of perhaps two hundred yards. The descent was effected by means of metallic bars projecting from the sides of the well, and since they were adapted to the needs of a creature much smaller and lighter than myself, I was speedily cramped and fatigued by the descent. And not simply fatigued. My weight suddenly bent one of the hooks and almost swung me off it down into the blackness beneath.

"For a moment I hung by one hand, and after that experience I did not dare to rest again, and though my arms and back were presently acutely painful, I continued to clamber with as quick a motion as possible down the sheer descent. Glancing upward I saw the aperture, a mere small blue disk above me, in which a star was visible, and little Weena's head appeared as a round black projection. The thudding sound of some machine below me grew louder and more oppressive. Everything save that minute circle above was profoundly dark. When I looked up again Weena had disappeared.

"I was in an agony of discomfort. I had some thought of trying to go up the shaft again, and leave the underworld alone. But while I turned this over in my mind I continued to descend.

"It was with intense relief that I saw dimly coming up a foot to the right of me, a slender loophole in the wall of the shaft, and swinging myself in, found it was the aperture of a narrow horizontal tunnel in which I could lie down and rest.

"It was not too soon. My arms ached, my back was cramped, and I was trembling with the prolonged fear of falling. Besides this, the unbroken darkness had had a distressing effect upon my eyes. The air was full of the throbbing and hum of the machinery that pumped the air down the shaft.

"I DO not know how long I lay in that tunnel. I was roused by a soft hand touching my face. Starting up in the darkness, I snatched at my matches and hastily striking one saw three grotesque, white creatures, similar to the one I had seen above ground in the ruin, hastily retreating before the light. Living as they did in what appeared to me impenetrable darkness, their eyes were abnormally large and sensitive, just as are the eyes of the abyssmal fishes or of any purely nocturnal creatures, and they reflected the light in the same way. I have no doubt they could see me in that rayless obscurity, and they did not seem to have any fear of me apart from the light. But so soon as I struck a match in order to see them, they fled incontinently, vanishing up dark gutters and tunnels from which their eyes glared at me in the strangest fashion.

"I tried to call to them, but what language they had was apparently a different one from that of the overworld people. So that I was needs left to my own unaided exploration. The thought of flight rather than exploration was even at that time in my mind.

"'You are in for it now,' said I to myself, and went on.

"Feeling my way along this tunnel of mine, the confused noise of machinery grew louder, and presently the walls fell away from me and I came to a large open space, and striking another match saw I had entered a vast arched cavern extending into darkness, at last, beyond the range of my light.

"The view I had of this cavern was as much as one could see in the burning of a match. Necessarily my memory of it is very vague. Great shapes like big machines rose out of the dim and threw grotesque black shadows, in which the spectral Morlocks sheltered from the glare. The place, by the bye, was very stuffy and oppressive, and the faint *halitus* of freshly shed blood was in the air. Some way down the central vista was a little table of white metal upon which a meal seemed to be spread. The Morlocks at any rate were carnivorous. Even at the time I remember thinking what large animal could have survived to furnish the red joint I saw. It was all very indistinct, the heavy smell, the big unmeaning shapes, the white figures lurking in the shadows, and only waiting for the darkness to come at me again. Then the match burned down and stung my fingers and fell, a wriggling red spot in the black.

"I have thought since how particularly ill equipped I was. When I had started with the Time Machine I had started with the absurd assumption that the men of the future would certainly be infinitely in front of us in all their appliances. I had come without arms, without medicine, with-

out anything to smoke,—at times I missed tobacco frightfully—even without enough matches. If I had only thought of a Kodak! I could have flashed that glimpse of the underworld in a second and examined it at leisure. But as it was, I stood there with only the weapons and powers that Nature had endowed me with—hands, feet, and teeth—except four safety matches that still remained to me.

"I was afraid to push my way in among all this machinery in the dark, and it was only with my last glimpse of light I discovered that my store of matches had run low. It had never occurred to me until that moment that there was any need to economize them, and I had wasted almost half of the box in astonishing the above-ground people, to whom fire was a novelty. As I say, I had four left.

"Then while I stood in the dark a hand touched mine; then some lank fingers came feeling over my face. I was sensible of a dull, unpleasant odor. I fancy I detected the breathing of a number of those little beings about me. I felt the box of matches in my hand being gently disengaged, and other hands behind me plucking at my clothing.

"The sense of these unseen creatures examining me was indescribably unpleasant. The sudden realization of my ignorance of their ways of thinking and possible actions came home to me very vividly in the darkness. I shouted at them as loudly as I could. They started away from me, and then I could feel them approaching me again. They clutched at me more boldly, whispering odd sounds to each other. I shivered violently and shouted again, rather discordantly. This time they were not so seriously alarmed and made a queer laughing noise as they came toward me again.

"I will confess I was horribly frightened. I determined to strike another match and escape under its glare. Eking it out with a scrap of paper from my pocket, I made good my retreat to the narrow tunnel. But hardly had I entered this when my light was blown out, and I could hear them in the blackness rustling like wind among leaves and pattering like the rain, as they hurried after me.

"In a moment I was clutched by several hands again, and there was no mistake now that they were trying to draw me back. I struck another light and waved it in their dazzled faces. You can scarcely imagine how nauseatingly inhuman those pale, chinless faces and great lidless, pinkish-gray eyes seemed, as they stared stupidly, evidently blinded by the light.

"So I gained time and retreated again, and when my second match had ended struck my third. That had almost burned through as I reached the opening of the tunnel upon the well. I lay down on the edge, for the throbbing whirl of the air-pumping machine below made me giddy, and felt sideways for the projecting hooks. As I did so my feet were grasped from behind and I was violently tugged backward. I lit my last match—and it incontinently went out. But I had my hand on the climbing bars now, and kicking violently disengaged myself from the clutches of the Morlocks, and was speedily clambering up the shaft again.

"They remained peering and blinking up the shaft, except one little wretch who followed me for some way, and indeed well-nigh captured my boot as a trophy.

"That upward climb seemed unending. While I still had the last twenty or thirty feet of it above me, a deadly nausea came upon me. I had the greatest difficulty in keeping my hold. The last few yards was a frightful struggle against this faintness. Several times my head swam and I felt all the sensations of falling.

"At last I got over the well mouth somehow and staggered out of the ruin into the blinding sunlight. I fell upon my face. Even the soil seemed sweet and clean.

"Then I remember Weena kissing my hands and ears, and the voices of others of the Eloi. Then probably I was insensible for a time.

CHAPTER IX

When the Night Came

"NOW, indeed, I seemed to be in a worse case than before. Hitherto, except during my night's anguish at the loss of the Time Machine, I had felt a sustaining hope of ultimate escape, but my hope was staggered by these new discoveries. Hitherto, I had merely thought myself impeded by the childish simplicity of the little people and by some unknown forces which I had only to understand in order to overcome. But there was an altogether new element in the sickening quality of the Morlocks, something inhuman and malign. Instinctively I loathed them. Before, I had felt as a man might feel who had fallen into a pit; my concern was with the pit and how to get out again. But now I felt like a beast in a trap, whose enemy would presently come.

"The enemy I dreaded may surprise you. It was the darkness of the new moon. Weena had put this into my head by some, at first, incomprehensible remarks about the Dark Nights. It was not now such a very difficult problem to guess what the coming Dark Nights might mean. The moon was on the wane; each night there was a longer interval of darkness. And I now understood, to some slight degree, at least, the reason of the fear of the little upperworld people for the dark. I wondered vaguely what foul villainy it might be that the Morlocks did under the darkness of the new moon.

"Whatever the origin of the existing conditions, I felt pretty sure now that my second hypothesis was all wrong. The upperworld people might once have been the favored aristocracy of the world, and the Morlocks their mechanical servants, but that state of affairs had passed away long since. The two species that had resulted from the evolution of man were sliding down toward, or had already arrived at, an altogether new relationship. The Eloi, like the Carlovingian kings, had decayed to a mere beautiful futility. They still possessed the earth on sufferance, since the Morlocks, subterranean for innumerable generations, had come at last to find the daylit surface unendurable. And the Morlocks made their garments, I inferred, and maintained them in their habitual need, perhaps through the survival of an old habit of service. They did it, as a standing horse paws with his foot, or as a man enjoys killing animals in sport—because an-

cient and departed necessities had impressed it on the organism. But clearly the old order was already in part reversed. The Nemesis of the delicate ones was creeping on apace. Ages ago, thousands of generations ago, man had thrust his brother man out of the ease and sunlight of life. And now that brother was coming back—changed. Already the Eloi had begun to learn one old lesson anew. They were becoming acquainted again with Fear.

"Then suddenly came into my head the memory of the meat I had seen in the underworld. It seemed odd how this memory floated into my mind, not stirred up, as it were, by the current of my meditations, but coming in almost like a question from outside. I tried to recall the form of it. I had a vague sense of something familiar, but at that time I could not tell what it was.

"Still, however helpless the little people might be in the presence of their mysterious Fear, I was differently constituted. I came out of this age of ours, this ripe prime of the human race, when fear does not paralyze and mystery has lost its terrors. I at least would defend myself. Without further delay I determined to make myself arms and a fastness where I might sleep with some security. From that refuge as a base I could face the strange world with some confidence again, a confidence I had lost now that I realized to what uncanny creatures I nightly lay exposed. I felt I could never sleep again until my bed was secure from them. I shuddered with horror to think how they must already have examined me during my sleep.

"I wandered during the afternoon along the valley of the Thames, but found nothing that commended itself to my mind as a sufficiently inaccessible retiring place. All the buildings and trees seemed easily practicable to such dexterous climbers as the Morlocks—to judge by their wells—must be. Then the tall pinnacles of the Palace of Green Porcelain, and the polished gleam of its walls, came back to my memory, and in the evening, taking Weena like a child upon my shoulder, I went up the hills toward the southwest.

"Now the distance I had reckoned was seven or eight miles, but it must have been nearer eighteen. I had first seen the Palace on a moist afternoon when distances are deceptively diminished. In addition, the heel of one of my shoes was loose, and a nail was working through the sole,—they were comfortable old shoes I wear about indoors,—so that I was lame. It was already long past sunset before I came in sight of the Palace, standing out in black silhouette against the pale yellow of the sky.

"Weena had been hugely delighted when first I carried her, but after a time she desired me to let her down and ran along by the side of me, occasionally darting off on either hand to pick flowers to stick in my pockets. My pockets had always puzzled Weena, but at the last she had concluded they were an eccentric kind of vases for floral decoration. At least she utilized them for that purpose.

"And that reminds me! As I changed my jacket I found——"

(*The Time Traveler paused, put his hand into his pocket, and silently placed two withered flowers, not unlike very large white mallows, upon the little table. Then he resumed his narrative.*)

"AS the hush of evening crept over the world and we proceeded over the hill-crest toward Wimbledon, Weena became tired and wanted to return to the house of gray stone. But I pointed out the distant pinnacles of the Palace of Green Porcelain to her, and contrived to make her understand that we were seeking a refuge there from her Fear.

"You know that great pause that comes upon things before the dusk. Even the breeze stops in the trees. There is to me always an air of expectation about that evening stillness. The sky was clear, remote, and empty, save for a few horizontal bars far down in the sunset.

"That night the expectation took the color of my fears. In the darkling calm my senses seemed preternaturally sharpened. I fancied I could even feel the hollowness of the ground beneath my feet, could indeed almost see through it, the Morlocks in their ant-hill going hither and thither and waiting for the dark. In this excited state I fancied that they would take my invasion of their burrows as a declaration of war. And why had they taken my Time Machine?

"So we went on in the quiet, and the twilight deepened into night. The clear blue of the distance faded and one star after another came out. The ground grew dim and the trees black. Weena's fears and her fatigue grew upon her. I took her in my arms and talked to her and caressed her. Then as the darkness grew profounder she put her arms round my neck, and closing her eyes tightly pressed her face against my shoulder.

"We went down a long slope into a valley, and there in the dimness I almost walked into a little river. This I waded, and went up the opposite side of the valley, past a number of sleeping houses, and by a statue that appeared to me in the indistinct light to represent a faun, or some such figure, minus the head. Here, too, were acacias. So far, I had seen nothing of the Morlocks, but it was yet early in the night, and the darker hours before the old moon rose were still to come.

"From the brow of the next hill I saw a thick wood spreading wide and black before me. At this I hesitated. I could see no end to it either to the right or to the left. Feeling tired,—my feet, in particular, were very sore,—I carefully lowered Weena from my shoulder as I halted, and sat down upon the turf. I could no longer see the Palace of Green Porcelain, and I was in doubt of my direction.

"I looked into the thickness of the wood, and thought of what it might hide. Under that dense tangle of branches one would be out of sight of the stars. Even were there no other lurking danger there,—a danger I did not care to let my imagination loose upon,—there would still be all the roots to stumble over, and the tree boles to strike myself against. I was very tired, too, after the excitements of the day, and I decided that I would not face it, but would pass the night upon the open hill.

"Weena, I was glad to discover, was fast asleep. I carefully wrapped her in my jacket, and sat down beside her to wait for the moonrise. The hillside upon which I sat was quiet and deserted, but from

the black of the wood there came now and then a stir of living things.

"Above me shone the stars, for the night was clear. I felt a certain sense of friendly comfort in their twinkling. All the old constellations had gone from the sky, however, for that slow movement that is imperceptible in a dozen human lifetimes, had long ago rearranged them in unfamiliar groupings. But the Milky Way, it seemed to me, was still the same tattered streamer of star dust as of yore. Southward—as I judged it—was a very bright red star that was new to me. It was even more splendid than our own green Sirius. Amid all these scintillating points of light, one planet shone kindly and steadily like the face of an old friend.

"Looking at these stars suddenly dwarfed my own troubles and all the gravities of terrestrial life. I thought of their unfathomable distance, and the slow, inevitable drift of their movements out of the unknown past into the unknown future. I thought of the great precessional cycle that the pole of the earth describes in the heavens. Only forty times had that silent revolution occurred during all the years I had traversed. And during those few revolutions, all the activity, all the traditions, the carefully planned organizations, the nations, languages, literature, aspirations, even the mere memory of man as I knew man, had been swept out of existence. Instead were these frail creatures who had forgotten their high ancestry, and the white animals of which I went in fear. Then I thought of the great fear there was between these two species, and for the first time, with a sudden shiver, came the clear knowledge of what the meat I had seen might be. Yet it was too horrible! I looked at little Weena sleeping beside me, her face white and starlike under the stars, and forthwith dismissed the thought from my mind.

"Through that long night I kept my mind off the Morlocks as well as I could, and whiled away the time by trying to fancy I could find traces of the old constellations among the new confusion. The sky kept very clear, except a hazy cloud or so. No doubt I dozed at times. Then, as my vigil wore on, came a faintness in the eastward sky like the reflection of some colorless fire, and the old moon rose thin and peaked and white. And close behind and overtaking it and overflowing it the dawn came, pale at first and then growing pink and warm.

"No Morlocks had approached us. Indeed, I had seen none upon the hill that night. And in the confidence of renewed day it almost seemed to me that my fear had been unreasonable. I stood up, and found my foot with the loose heel swollen at the ankle and painful under the heel. I sat down again, took off my shoes, and flung them away.

"I awakened Weena, and forthwith we went down into the wood, now green and pleasant, instead of black and forbidding. And there we found some fruit wherewith to break our fast. We soon met others of the dainty ones, laughing and dancing in the sunlight, as though there was no such thing in nature as the night.

"Then I thought once more of the meat that I had seen. I felt assured now of what it was, and, from the bottom of my heart, I pitied this last feeble rill from the great flood of humanity. Clearly, somewhere in the long ages of human decay, the food of the Morlocks had run short. Possibly they had lived on rats and suchlike vermin. Even now, man is far less discriminating and exclusive in his food than he was, far less than any monkey. His prejudice against human flesh is no deep-seated instinct. And so these inhuman sons of men——

"I tried to look at the thing in a scientific spirit. After all, these were scarcely to be counted human beings; less human they were and more remote than our cannibal ancestors of three or four thousand years ago. And the minds that would have made this state torment were gone. Why should I trouble? The Eloi were mere fatted cattle, which the antlike Morlocks preserved and preyed upon, probably saw to the breeding of. And there was Weena dancing by my side!

"Then I tried to preserve myself from the horror that was coming upon me by regarding it as a rigorous punishment of human selfishness; man had been content to live in ease and delight upon the labors of his fellow-men; had taken Necessity as his watchword and excuse, and in fullness of time Necessity had come home to him. I tried even a Carlyle-like scorn of these wretched aristocrats in decline.

"But this attitude of mind was impossible. However great their intellectual degradation, the Eloi had kept too much of the human form not to claim my sympathy, and to make me perforce a participant in their degradation and their Fear.

"I had at this time very vague ideas of what course I should pursue. My first idea was to secure some safe place of refuge for Weena and myself, and to make myself such arms of metal or stone as I could contrive. That necessity was immediate. In the next place, I hoped to procure some means of fire, so that I should have the weapon of a torch at hand, for nothing, I knew, would be more efficient against these Morlocks. Then I wanted to arrange some contrivance to break open the doors of bronze under the white sphinx. I had in mind a battering ram. I had a persuasion that if I could enter these doors and carry a blaze of light before me, I should discover the Time Machine and escape. I could not imagine the Morlocks were powerful enough to remove it far. Weena I had resolved to bring with me to our own Time.

"Turning such schemes over in my mind, I pursued our way toward the building which my fancy had chosen as our dwelling-place.

CHAPTER X

The Palace of Green Porcelain

"THIS Palace of Green Porcelain, when we approached it about noon, was, I found, deserted and falling into ruin. Only ragged vestiges of glass remained in its windows, and great sheets of the green facing had fallen away in places from the corroded metallic framework. It lay very high upon a turfy down, and, looking northeastward before I entered it, I was surprised to see a large estuary, or an arm of the sea, where I judged Wandsworth and Battersea must once have been. I thought then—though I never followed the thought up—of what might

have happened, or might be happening, to the living things in the sea.

"The material of the Palace proved, on examination, to be indeed porcelain, and above the face of it I saw an inscription in some unknown characters. I thought, rather foolishly, that Weena might help me to interpret this, but I only learned that the bare idea of writing had never entered her head. She always seemed to me, I fancy, more human than she was, perhaps because her affection was so human.

"Within the big valves of the door—which were open and broken—we found, instead of the customary hall, a long gallery lit by many side windows. Even at the first glance I was reminded of a museum. The tiled floor was thick with dust, and a remarkable array of miscellaneous objects were shrouded in the same gray covering. Clearly, the place had been derelict for a very considerable time.

"Then I perceived, standing strange and gaunt in the center of the hall, what was clearly the lower part of the skeleton of some huge animal. As I approached this I recognized by the oblique feet that it was some extinct creature after the fashion of the *megatherium*. The skull and the upper bones lay beside it in the thick dust, and in one place where rain water had dripped through some leak in the roof, the skeleton had decayed away. Further along the gallery was the huge skeleton barrel of a *brontosaurus*. My museum hypothesis was confirmed. Going toward the side of the gallery I found what appeared to be sloping shelves, and clearing away the thick dust, I found the old familiar glass cases of our own time. But these must have been air-tight to judge from the fair preservation of some of their contents.

"Clearly we stood among the ruins of some latter day South Kensington.* Here apparently was the Palæontological Section, and a very splendid array of fossils it must have been; though the inevitable process of decay that had been warded off for a time, and had, through the extinction of bacteria and fungi, lost ninety-nine-hundredths of its force, was nevertheless, with extreme sureness, if with extreme slowness, at work again upon all its treasures. Here and there I found traces of the little people in the shape of rare fossils broken to pieces and threaded in strings upon reeds. And the cases had in some instances been bodily removed—by the Morlocks, as I judged.

"The place was very silent. The thick dust deadened our footsteps. Weena, who had been rolling a sea urchin down the sloping glass of a case, presently came, as I stared about me, and very quietly took my hand and stood beside me.

"At first I was so much surprised by this ancient monument of an intellectual age that I gave no thought to the possibilities it presented me. Even my preoccupation about the Time Machine and the Morlocks receded a little from my mind. The curiosity concerning human destiny that had led to my time traveling was removed. Now, judging from the size of the place, this Palace of Green Porcelain had a great deal more in it than a gallery of palæontology; possibly historical galleries, it might be even a library. To me, at least in my present circumstances, these would be vastly more interesting than this spectacle of old-time geology in decay.

"Exploring, I found another short gallery running transversely to the first. This appeared to be devoted to minerals, and the sight of a block of sulphur set my mind running on gunpowder. But I could find no saltpeter, indeed no nitrates of any kind. Doubtless they had deliquesced ages ago. Yet the sulphur hung in my mind and set up a train of thinking. As for the rest of the contents of that place, though on the whole they were the best preserved of all I saw—I had little interest. I am no specialist in mineralogy, and I soon went on down a very ruinous aisle running parallel to the first hall I had entered.

"Apparently this section had been devoted to Natural History, but here everything had long since passed out of recognition. A few shriveled vestiges of what had once been stuffed animals, dried-up mummies in jars that had once held spirit, a brown dust of departed plants, that was all. I was sorry for this, because I should have been glad to trace the patient readjustments by which the conquest of animated nature had been attained.

"From this we came to a gallery of simply colossal proportions, but singularly ill lit, and with its floor running downward at a slight angle from the end at which I entered it. At intervals there hung white globes from the ceiling—many of them cracked and smashed,—which suggested that originally the place had been artificially lit. Here I was more in my element, for I found rising on either side of me the huge bulks of big machines, all greatly corroded, and many broken down, but some still fairly complete in all their parts. You know I have a certain weakness for mechanism, and I was inclined to linger among these, the more so since for the most part they had the interest of puzzles, and I could make only the vaguest guesses of what they were for. I fancied if I could solve these puzzles I should find myself in the possession of powers that might be of use against the Morlocks.

"Suddenly Weena came very close to my side, so suddenly that she startled me.

"Had it not been for her I do not think I should have noticed that the floor of the gallery sloped at all.* The end I had entered was quite above ground, and was lit by rare slit-like windows. As one went down the length of the place, the ground came up against these windows, until there was at last a pit like the 'area' of a London house, before each, and only a narrow line of daylight at the top. I went slowly along, puzzling about the machines, and had been too intent upon them to notice the gradual diminution of the light, until Weena's increasing apprehension attracted my attention.

"Then I saw that the gallery ran down at last into a thick darkness. I hesitated about proceeding, and then as I looked around me, I saw that the dust was here less abundant and its surface less even. Further away toward the dim, it ap-

*The great English Museum in London.

*It may be, of course, that the floor did not slope, but that the museum was built upon the side of the hill.—EDITOR.

peared to be broken by a number of small narrow footprints. At that my sense of the immediate presence of the Morlocks revived. I felt that I was wasting my time in my academic examination of this machinery. I called to mind that it was already far advanced in the afternoon, and that I had still no weapon, no refuge, and no means of making a fire. And then, down in the remote black of the gallery, I heard a peculiar pattering and those same odd noises I had heard down the well.

"I TOOK Weena's hand. Then struck with a sudden idea, I left her, and turned to a machine from which projected a lever not unlike those in a signal box. Clambering upon the stand of the machine and grasping this lever in my hands, I put all my weight upon it sideways. Weena, deserted in the central aisle, began suddenly to whimper. I had judged the strength of the lever pretty correctly, for it snapped after a minute's strain, and I rejoined Weena with a mace in my hand more than sufficient, I judged, for any Morlock skull I might encounter.

"And I longed very much to kill a Morlock or so. Very inhuman, you may think, to want to go killing one's own descendants, but it was impossible somehow to feel any humanity in the things. Only my disinclination to leave Weena, and a persuasion that if I began to slake my thirst for murder my Time Machine might suffer, restrained me from going straight down the gallery and killing the brutes I heard there.

"Mace in one hand and Weena in the other we went out of the gallery and into another still larger, which at the first glance reminded me of a military chapel hung with tattered flags. The brown and charred rags that hung from the sides of it, I presently recognized as the decaying vestiges of books. They had long since dropped to pieces and every semblance of print had left them. But here and there were warped and cracked boards and metallic clasps that told the tale well enough.

"Had I been a literary man I might perhaps have moralized upon the futility of all ambition, but as it was, the thought that struck me with keenest force, was the enormous waste of labor rather than of hope, to which this somber gallery of rotting paper testified. At the time I will confess, though it seems a petty trait now, that I thought chiefly of the Philosophical Transactions, and my own seventeen papers upon physical optics.

"Then going up a broad staircase we came to what may once have been a gallery of technical chemistry. And here I had not a little hope of discovering something to help me. Except at one end where the roof had collapsed, this gallery was well preserved. I went eagerly to every unbroken case. And at last, in one of the really air-tight cases, I found a box of matches. Very eagerly I tried them. They were perfectly good. They were not even damp.

"At that discovery I suddenly turned to Weena. 'Dance!' I cried to her in her own tongue. For now I had a weapon indeed against the horrible creatures we feared. And so in that derelict museum, upon the thick soft coating of dust, to Weena's huge delight, I solemnly performed a sort of composite dance, whistling 'The Land of the Leal' as cheerfully as I could. In part it was a modest cancan, in part a step dance, in part a skirt dance,—so far as my tail coat permitted,—and in part original. For naturally I am inventive, as you know.

"Now, I still think that for this box of matches to have escaped the wear of time for immemorial years was a strange, and for me, a most fortunate thing. Yet oddly enough I found here a far more unlikely substance, and that was camphor. I found it in a sealed jar, that, by chance, I supposed had been really hermetically sealed. I fancied at first the stuff was paraffin wax, and smashed the jar accordingly. But the odor of camphor was unmistakable. It struck me as singularly odd, that among the universal decay, this volatile substance had chanced to survive, perhaps through many thousand years. It reminded me of a sepia painting I had once seen done from the ink of a fossil Belemnite that must have perished and become fossilized millions of years ago. I was about to throw this camphor on one side, and then remembering that it was inflammable and burnt with a good bright flame, I put it into my pocket.

"I found no explosives, however, or any means of breaking down the bronze doors. As yet my iron crowbar was the most hopeful thing I had chanced upon. Nevertheless I left that gallery greatly elated by my discoveries.

"I cannot tell you the whole story of my exploration through that long afternoon. It would require a great effort of memory to recall it at all in the proper order. I remember a long gallery containing the rusting stands of arms of all ages, and that I hesitated between my crowbar and a hatchet or a sword. I could not carry both, however, and my bar of iron, after all, promised best against the bronze gates. There were rusty guns, pistols, and rifles here; most of them were masses of rust, but many of aluminum, and still fairly sound. But any cartridges or powder there may have been had rotted into dust. One corner I saw was charred and shattered; perhaps, I thought, by an explosion among the specimens there. In another place was a vast array of idols—Polynesian, Mexican, Grecian, Phœnician, every country on earth, I should think. And here, yielding to an irresistible impulse, I wrote my name upon the nose of a steatite monster from South America that particularly took my fancy.

"As the evening drew on my interest waned. I went through gallery after gallery, dusty, silent, often ruinous, the exhibits sometimes mere heaps of rust and lignite, sometimes fresher. In one place I suddenly found myself near a model of a tin mine, and then by the merest accident I discovered in an air-tight case two dynamite cartridges; I shouted 'Eureka!' and smashed the case joyfully. Then came a doubt. I hesitated, and then selecting a little side gallery I made my essay. I never felt such a bitter disappointment as I did then, waiting five, ten, fifteen minutes for the explosion that never came. Of course the things were dummies, as I might have guessed from their presence there. I really believe had they not been

so, I should have rushed off incontinently there and then, and blown sphinx, bronze doors, and, as it proved, my chances of finding the Time Machine all together into non-existence.

"It was after that, I think, that we came to a little open court within the palace, turfed and with three fruit trees. There it was we rested and refreshed ourselves.

"Toward sunset I began to consider our position. Night was now creeping upon us and my inaccessible hiding-place was still to be found. But that troubled me very little now. I had in my possession a thing that was perhaps the best of all defenses against the Morlocks. I had matches again. I also had the camphor in my pocket if a blaze were required. It seemed to me that the best thing we could do would be to pass the night in the open again, protected by a fire.

"In the morning there was the Time Machine to obtain. Toward that as yet I had only my iron mace. But now with my growing knowledge I felt very differently toward the bronze doors than I had done hitherto. Up to this I had refrained from forcing them, largely because of the mystery on the other side. They had never impressed me as being very strong, and I hoped to find my bar of iron not altogether inadequate for the work.

CHAPTER XI

In the Darkness of the Forest

"WE emerged from the Palace of Green Porcelain while the sun was still in part above the horizon. I was determined to reach the white sphinx early the next morning, and I proposed before the dusk came to push through the woods that had stopped me on the previous journey. My plan was to go as far as possible that night, and then, building a fire about us, to sleep under the protection of its glare. Accordingly as we went along I gathered any sticks or dried grass I saw, and presently had my arms full of such litter. So loaded, our progress was slower than I had anticipated, and besides, Weena was tired. I, too, began to suffer from sleepiness, and it was fully night before we reached the wood.

"Now, upon the shrubby hill upon the edge of this, Weena would have stopped, fearing the darkness before us. But a singular sense of impending calamity, that should indeed have served me as a warning, drove me onward. I had been without sleep for the length of a night and two days, and I was feverish and irritable. I felt sleep coming upon me, and with it the Morlocks.

"While we hesitated I saw among the bushes up the slope behind us, and dim against the sky, three crouching figures. There was scrub and long grass all about us, and I did not feel safe from their insidious approach. The forest, I calculated, was rather less than a mile in breadth. If we could get through it, the hillside beyond was bare, and to me it seemed an altogether safer resting-place. I thought that with my matches and the camphor I could contrive to keep my path illuminated through the woods. Yet it was evident that if I was to flourish matches with my hands I should have to abandon my firewood. So rather reluctantly I put this down.

"Then it came into my head that I would amaze our friends behind by lighting it. Ultimately I was to discover the atrocious folly of this proceeding, but just then it came to my mind as an ingenious move for covering our retreat.

"I don't know if you have ever thought what a rare thing in the absence of man and in a temperate climate, flames must be. The sun's heat is rarely strong enough to burn even when focussed by dewdrops, as is sometimes the case in more tropical districts. Lightning may blast and blacken, but it rarely gives rise to widespread fire. Decaying vegetation may occasionally smoulder with the heat of its fermentation, but this again rarely results in flames. Now, in this decadent age the art of fire-making had been altogether forgotten on the earth. The red tongues that went licking up my heap of wood were an altogether new and strange thing to Weena.

"She wanted to run to it and play with it. I believe she would have cast herself into it had I not restrained her. But I caught her up and in spite of her struggles plunged boldly before me into the wood. For a little way the glare of my fire lit the path. Looking back presently I could see, through the crowded tree stems, that from my heap of sticks the blaze had spread to some bushes adjacent, and a curved line of fire was creeping up the grass of the hill. I laughed at that.

"Then I turned toward the dark trees before me again. It was very black and Weena clung to me convulsively, but there was still, as my eyes grew accustomed to the darkness, sufficient light for me to avoid blundering against the stems. Overhead it was simply black, except when here and there a gap of remote blue sky shone down upon me. I lit none of my matches because I had no hand free. Upon my left arm I carried my little one, in my right hand I had the iron bar I had wrenched from the machine.

"For some way I heard nothing but the crackling twigs under my feet, the faint rustle of the breeze above, and my breathing and the throb of the blood vessels in my ears. Then I seemed to hear a pattering about me.

"I pushed on grimly. The pattering became more distinct, and then I heard the same queer sounds and voices I had heard before in the underworld. There were evidently several of the Morlocks, and they were closing in upon me.

"In another minute I felt a tug at my coat, then something at my arm. Weena shivered violently and became quite still.

"It was time for a match. But to get at that I must put her down. I did so, and immediately as I fumbled with my pocket a struggle began in the darkness about my knees, perfectly silent on her part and with the same peculiar cooing sounds on the part of the Morlocks. Soft little hands, too, were creeping over my coat and back, touching even my neck.

"The match scratched and fizzed. I held it flaring, and immediately the white backs of the Morlocks became visible as they fled amid the trees. I hastily took a lump of camphor from my pocket

and prepared to light it as soon as the match waned.

"Then I looked at Weena. She was lying clutching my feet and quite motionless, with her face to the ground. With a sudden fright I stooped to her. She seemed scarcely to breathe. I lit the block of camphor and flung it to the ground, and as it spit and flared up and drove back the Morlocks and the shadows, I knelt down and lifted up Weena. The wood behind seemed full of the stir and murmur of a great company of creatures.

"Apparently she had fainted. I put her carefully upon my shoulder and rose to push on, and then came a horrible realization.

"While maneuvering with my matches and Weena, I had turned myself about several times, and now I had not the faintest idea in what direction my path lay. For all I knew I might be facing back toward the Palace of Green Porcelain.

"I found myself in a cold perspiration. I had to think rapidly what to do. I determined to build a fire and encamp where we were. I put the motionless Weena down upon a turfy bole. Very hastily, as my first lump of camphor waned, I began collecting sticks and leaves.

"Here and there out of the darkness round me the eyes of the Morlocks shone like carbuncles.

"Presently the camphor flickered and went out. I lit a match, and as I did so saw two white forms that had been approaching Weena dash hastily back. One was so blinded by the light that he came straight for me, and I felt his bones grind under the blow of my fist. He gave a whoop of dismay, staggered a little way, and fell down.

"I lit another piece of camphor and went on gathering my bonfire. Presently I noticed how dry was some of the foliage above me, for since I had arrived on the Time Machine, a matter of a week, no rain had fallen. So instead of casting about among the trees for fallen twigs I began leaping up and dragging down branches. Very soon I had a choking smoky fire of green wood and dry sticks, and could save my other lumps of camphor.

"Then I turned to where Weena lay beside my iron mace. I tried what I could to revive her, but she lay like one dead. I could not even satisfy myself whether or not she breathed.

"Now the smoke of the fire beat over toward me, and it must have made me suddenly heavy. Moreover the vapor of camphor was in the air. My fire would not want replenishing for an hour or so. I felt very weary after my exertion and sat down. The wood, too, was full of slumberous murmur that I did not understand.

"I SEEMED merely to nod and open my eyes. Then it was all dark around me, and the Morlocks had their hands upon me. Flinging off their clinging fingers I hastily felt in my pocket for the match-box, and—it had gone! Then they gripped and closed with me again.

"In a moment I knew what had happened. I had slept, and my fire had gone out, and the bitterness of death came over my soul. The forest seemed full of the smell of burning wood. I was caught by the neck, by the hair, by the arms, and pulled 'own. It was indescribably horrible in the darkness to feel all these soft creatures heaped upon me. I felt as if I was in a monstrous spider's web. I was overpowered. Down I went.

"I felt some little teeth nipping at my neck. Abruptly I rolled over, and as I did so, my hand came against my iron lever. Somehow this gave me strength for another effort. I struggled up, shaking off these human rats from me, and then holding the bar short, I thrust where I judged their faces might be. I could feel the succulent giving of flesh and bone under my blows, and for a moment I was free.

"The strange exultation that so often seems to accompany fighting came upon me. I knew that both I and Weena were lost, but I determined to make the Morlocks pay for their meat. I stood with my back to a tree swinging the iron bar before me. The whole wood was full of the stir and cries of them.

"A minute passed. Their voices seemed to rise to a higher pitch of excitement and their movements became faster. Yet none came within reach of me. I stood glaring at the blackness. Then suddenly came hope.

"What if the Morlocks had no courage?

"And close on the heels of that came a strange thing. The darkness seemed to grow luminous. Very dimly I began to see the Morlocks about me, —three, battered at my feet,—and then I perceived with incredulous surprise that the others were running, in an incessant stream, as it seemed to me, from behind me, and away through the wood in front of me. And their backs seemed no longer white, but reddish.

"Then as I stood agape I saw, across a gap of starlight between the branches, a little red spark go drifting and vanish. And at that I understood the smell of burning wood, the slumberous murmur that was growing now into a gusty roaring, the red glow, and the flight of the Morlocks.

"Stepping out from behind my tree and looking back, I saw through the back pillars of the nearer trees the flames of the burning forest. No doubt it was my first fire coming after me. With that I hastily looked round for Weena, but she was gone. The hissing and crackling behind me, the explosive thud as each fresh tree burst into flame, left little time for reflection. With my iron bar still in hand I followed in the path of the Morlocks.

"It was a close race. Once the flames crept forward so swiftly on my right as I ran, that I was outflanked and had to strike off to the left. But at last I emerged upon a small open place, and as I did so, a Morlock came blundering toward me and passed me, and went on straight into the fire.

"And now I was to see the most weird and horrible scene, I think, of all that I beheld in that future age.

"This whole space was as bright as day with the reflection of the fire. In the center was a small hillock or tumulus surmounted by a scorched hawthorn. Beyond this hill was another arm of the burning forest from which yellow tongues were already writhing, and completely encircling the space with a fence of fire. Upon the hillside were perhaps thirty or forty Morlocks, dazzled by the light and heat of the fire, which was now very

bright and hot, blundering hither and thither against each other in their bewilderment. At first I did not realize their blindness, and struck furiously at them with my bar in a frenzy of fear as they approached me, killing one and crippling several others. But when I had watched the gestures of one of them groping under the hawthorn against the red sky, and heard the moans to which they all gave vent, I was assured of their absolute helplessness and refrained from striking any of them again. Yet every now and then one would come straight toward me, setting loose a quivering horror, that made me quick to elude him. At one time the flames died down somewhat, and I feared these foul creatures would presently be able to see me, and I was even thinking of beginning the fight by killing some of them before this should happen, but the fire burst out again brightly and I stayed my hand. I walked about the hill among them and avoiding them, looked for some trace of Weena, but I found nothing.

"At last I sat down upon the summit of the hillock and watched this strange incredible company of the blind, groping to and fro and making uncanny noises to one another, as the glare of the fire beat upon them. The coiling uprush of smoke streamed across the sky, and through the rare tatters of that red canopy, remote as though they belonged to another universe, shone the little stars. Two or three Morlocks came blundering into me and I drove them off, trembling myself as I did so, with blows of my fists. For the most of that night I was persuaded it was a nightmare. I bit myself and screamed aloud in a passionate desire to awake. I beat on the ground with my hands, and got up, and sat down again, and wandered here and there, and again sat down on the crest of the hill. Then I would fall to rubbing my eyes and calling upon God to let me awake. Thrice I saw Morlocks put their heads down in a kind of agony and rush into the flames. But at last, above the subsiding red of the fire, above the streaming masses of black smoke and the whitening and blackening tree stumps, and the diminishing number of these dim creatures, came the white light of the day.

"I searched again over the open space for some traces of Weena, but could find none. I had half feared to discover her mangled remains, but clearly they had left her poor little body in the forest. I cannot describe how it relieved me to think that it had escaped the awful fate to which it seemed destined. As I thought of that I was almost moved to begin a massacre of the defenseless abominations about me, but I contained myself. This hillock, as I have said, was a kind of island in the forest. From its summit I could now make out, through a haze of smoke, the Palace of Green Porcelain, and from that I could get my bearings for the white sphinx. And so leaving the remnant of these damned souls going hither and thither and moaning, as the day grew clearer, I tied some grass about my feet and limped on across smoking ashes and among black stems that still pulsated internally with fire, toward the hiding place of the Time Machine.

"I walked slowly, for I was almost exhausted as well as lame, and I felt the most intense wretchedness on account of the horrible death of little Weena, which then seemed an overwhelming calamity. Yet even now, as I tell you of it in this old familiar room, it seems more like the sorrow of a dream than an actual loss. But it left me absolutely lonely again that morning—terribly alone. I began to think of this house of mine, of this fireside, of some of you, and with such thoughts came a longing that was pain.

"As I walked over the smoking ashes under the bright morning sky I made a discovery. In my trouser pocket were still some loose matches. The box must have leaked before it was lost!

CHAPTER XII

The Trap of the White Sphinx

"So about eight or nine in the morning I came to the same seat of yellow metal from which I had viewed the world upon the evening of my arrival. I thought of my hasty conclusions upon that evening and could not refrain from laughing bitterly at my confidence. Here was the same beautiful scene, the same abundant foliage, the same splendid palaces and magnificent ruins, the same silver river running between its fertile banks. The gay robes of the beautiful people moved hither and thither among the trees. Some were bathing in exactly the place where I had saved Weena, and that suddenly gave me a keen stab of pain. And like blots upon the landscape rose the cupolas above the ways to the underworld. I understood now what all the beauty of the overworld people covered. Very pleasant was their day, as pleasant as the day of cattle in the field. Like the cattle they knew of no enemies, and provided against no needs. And their end was the same.

"I grieved to think how brief the dream of the human intellect had been. It had committed suicide. It had set itself steadfastly toward comfort and ease, a balanced society with security and permanence as its watchwords, it had attained its hopes—to come to this at last. Once, life and property must have reached almost absolute safety. The rich had been assured of his wealth and comfort, the toiler assured of his life and work. No doubt in that perfect world there had been no unemployed problem, no social question left unsolved. And a great quiet had followed.

"It is a law of nature we overlook that intellectual versatility is the compensation for change, danger, and trouble. An animal perfectly in harmony with its environment is a perfect mechanism. Nature never appeals to intelligence until habit and instinct are useless. There is no intelligence where there is no change and no need of change. Only those animals partake of intelligence that have to meet a huge variety of needs and dangers.

"So, as I see it, the upperworld man had drifted toward his feeble prettiness, and the underworld to mere mechanical industry. But that perfect state had lacked one thing even of mechanical perfection—absolute permanency. Apparently as time went on the feeding of the underworld, however it was effected, had become disjointed. Mother

Necessity, who had been staved off for a few thousand years, came back again, and she began below. The underworld, being in contact with machinery which, however perfect, still needs some little thought outside of habit, had probably retained, perforce, rather more initiative, if less of every other human character, than the upper. And when other meat failed them, they turned to what old habit had hitherto forbidden. So I say I saw it in my last view of the world of 810,701. It may be as wrong an explanation as mortal wit could invent. It is how the thing shaped itself to me, and as that I give it to you.

"After the fatigues, excitements, and terrors of the past days, and in spite of my grief, this seat and the tranquil view and the warm sunlight were very pleasant. I was very tired and sleepy, and soon my theorizing passed into dozing. Catching myself at that I took my own hint, and spreading myself out upon the turf, I had a long and refreshing sleep.

"I awoke a little before sunsetting. I now felt safe against being caught napping by the Morlocks, and stretching myself I came on down the hill toward the white sphinx. I had my crowbar in one hand, and the other played with the matches in my pocket.

"And now came a most unexpected thing. As I approached the pedestal of the sphinx I found the bronze panels were open. They had slid down into grooves.

"At that I stopped short before them, hesitating to enter.

"Within was a small apartment, and on a raised place in the corner of this was the Time Machine. I had the small levers in my pocket. So here, after all my elaborate preparations for the siege of the white sphinx, was a meek surrender. I threw my iron bar away, almost sorry not to use it.

"A sudden thought came into my head as I stooped toward the portal. For once at least I grasped the mental operations of the Morlocks. Suppressing a strong inclination to laugh, I stepped through the bronze frame and up to the Time Machine. I was surprised to find it had been carefully oiled and cleaned. I have suspected since that the Morlocks had even partially taken it to pieces while trying in their dim way to grasp its purpose.

"Now, as I stood and examined it, finding a pleasure in the mere touch of the contrivance, the thing I had expected happened. The bronze panels suddenly slid up and struck the frame with a clang. I was in the dark—trapped. So the Morlocks thought. At that I chuckled gleefully.

"I could already hear their murmuring laughter as they came toward me. Very calmly I tried to strike the match. I had only to fix on the levers and depart then like a ghost. But I had overlooked one little thing. The matches were of that abominable kind that light only on the box.

"You may imagine how all my calm vanished. The little brutes were close upon me. One touched me. I made a sweeping blow in the dark at them with the lever, and began to scramble into the saddle of the Machine. Then came one hand upon me and then another.

"Then I had simply to fight against their persistent fingers for my levers, and at the same time feel for the studs over which these fitted. One, indeed, they almost got away from me. As it slipped from my hand I had to butt in the dark with my head—I could hear the Morlock's skull ring—to recover it. It was a nearer thing than the fight in the forest, I think, this last scramble.

"But at last the lever was fixed and pulled over. The clinging hands slipped from me. The darkness presently fell from my eyes. I found myself in the same gray light and tumult I have already described.

CHAPTER XIII

The Further Vision

"I HAVE already told you of the sickness and confusion that comes with time traveling. And this time I was not seated properly in the saddle, but sideways and in an unstable fashion. For an indefinite time I clung to the machine as it swayed and vibrated, quite unheeding how I went, and when I brought myself to look at the dials again I was amazed to find where I had arrived. One dial records days, another thousands of days, another millions of days, and anothers thousands of millions. Now instead of reversing the levers I had pulled them over so as to go forward with them, and when I came to look at these indicators I found that the thousands hand was sweeping round as fast as the seconds hand of a watch, into futurity.

"Very cautiously, for I remembered my former headlong fall, I began to reverse my motion. Slower and slower went the circling hands, until the thousands one seemed motionless and the daily one was no longer a mere mist upon its scale. Still slower, until the gray haze around me became distincter, and dim outlines of a low hill and a sea became visible.

"But as my motion became slower there was, I found, no blinking change of day and night. A steady twilight brooded over the earth. And the band of light that had indicated the sun had, I now noticed, become fainter, had faded indeed to invisibility in the east, and in the west was increasingly broader and redder. The circling of the stars growing slower and slower had given place to creeping points of light. At last, some time before I stopped, the sun, red and very large, halted motionless upon the horizon, a vast dome glowing with a dull heat. The work of the tidal drag was accomplished. The earth had come to rest with one face to the sun even as in our own time the moon faces the earth.

"I stopped very gently and sat upon the Time Machine looking round me.

"The sky was no longer blue. Northeastward it was inky black, and out of the blackness shone brightly and steadily the pale white stars. Overhead it was a deep Indian red, and starless, and southeastward it grew brighter to where, cut by the horizon, lay the motionless hull of the huge red sun.

"The rocks about me were of a harsh reddish color, and all the trace of life that I could see at

first was the intensely green vegetation that covered every projecting point on its southeastern side. It was the same rich green that one sees on forest moss or on the lichen in caves, plants which, like these, grow in a perpetual twilight.

"The Machine was standing on a sloping beach. The sea stretched away to the southwest to rise into a sharp bright horizon against the wan sky. There were no breakers and no waves, for not a breath of wind was stirring. Only a slight oily swell rose and fell like a gentle breathing, and showed that the eternal sea was still moving and living. And along the margin where the water sometimes broke was a thick incrustation of salt —pink under the lurid sky.

"There was a sense of oppression in my head and I noticed that I was breathing very fast. The sensations remind me of my only experience of mountaineering, and from that I judged the air was more rarified than it is now.

"Far away up the desolate slope I heard a harsh scream, and saw a thing like a huge white butterfly go slanting and fluttering up into the sky and, circling, disappear over some low hillocks beyond.

"The sound of its voice was so dismal that I shivered, and seated myself more firmly upon the Machine.

"Looking round me I saw that, quite near to me, what I had taken to be a reddish mass of rock was moving slowly toward me. Then I saw the thing was really a monstrous crab-like creature. Can you imagine a crab as large as yonder table, with its numerous legs moving slowly and uncertainly, its big claws swaying, its long antennæ, like carters' whips, waving and feeling, and its stalked eyes gleaming at you on either side of its metallic front? Its back was corrugated and ornamented with ungainly bosses, and a greenish incrustation blotched it here and there. I could see the numerous palps of its complicated mouth flickering and feeling as it approached.

"As I stared at this sinister apparition crawling toward me, I felt a tickling on my cheeks as though a fly had alighted there.

"I tried to brush it away with my hand, but in a moment it returned, and almost immediately after another came near my ear. I struck at this and caught something threadlike. It was drawn swiftly out of my hand. With a frightful qualm I turned and saw I had grasped the antennæ of another monster crab that stood immediately behind me. Its evil eyes were wriggling on their stalks, its mouth was all alive with appetite, and its vast ungainly claws, smeared with green slime, were descending upon me.

"In a moment my hand was on the lever of the Time Machine, and I had placed a month between myself and these monsters. But I found I was still on the same beach and I saw them distinctly now as soon as I had stopped. Dozens of them seemed to be crawling here and there in the somber light among the foliated sheets of intense green.

"I CANNOT convey the sense of abominable desolation that hung over the world. The red eastern sky, the northward blackness, the salt Dead Sea, the stony beach crawling with these foul, slow-stirring monsters, the uniform, poisonous-looking green of the lichenous plants, the thin air that hurt one's lungs; all contributed to an appalling effect.

"I moved on a hundred years, and there was the same red sun, the same dying sea, the same chill air, and the same crowd of earthly crustacea creeping in and out among the green weed and the red rocks.

"So I traveled, stopping ever and again, in great strides of a thousand years or more, drawn by the mystery of the earth's face, tracing with a strange fascination how the sun was growing larger and duller in the westward sky, and the life of the old earth ebbing out. At last, more than thirty million years hence, the huge red-hot dome of the sun had come to obscure nearly a sixth part of the darkling heavens. Then it was I stopped, for the crawling multitude of crabs had disappeared, and the red beach, save for its livid green liverworts and lichens, seemed lifeless again.

"As soon as I stopped a bitter cold assailed me. The air felt keenly cold, and rare white flakes ever and again came eddying down. To the northeastward the glare of snow lay under the starlight of the sable sky, and I could see an undulating crest of pinkish white hillocks. There were fringes of ice along the sea margin, drifting masses further out, but the main expanse of that salt ocean, all bloody under the eternal sunset, was still unfrozen.

"I looked about me to see if any traces of animals remained. A certain indefinable apprehension still kept me in the saddle of the Machine. I saw nothing moving, on earth or sky or sea. The green slime on the rocks alone testified that life was not extinct. A shallow sandbank had appeared in the sea and the water had receded from the beach. I fancied I saw some black object flopping about upon this bank, but it became motionless as I looked at it, and I judged my eye had been deceived and that the object was merely a rock. The stars in the sky were intensely bright and seemed to me to twinkle very little.

"Suddenly I noticed that the circular outline, westward, of the sun had changed, that a concavity, a bay, had appeared in the curve. I saw this grow larger. For a minute, perhaps, I stared aghast at this blackness that was creeping over the day, and then I realized that an eclipse was beginning. No doubt, now that the moon was creeping ever nearer to the earth, and the earth to the sun, eclipses were of frequent occurrence.

"The darkness grew apace, a cold wind began to blow in freshening gusts from the east, and then the white flakes that were falling out of the air increased. The tide was creeping in with a ripple and a whisper. Beyond these lifeless sounds the world was silent—silent! It would be hard to convey to you the stillness of it. All the sounds of man, the bleating of sheep, the cries of birds, the hum of insects, the stir that makes the background of our lives, were over. As the darkness thickened the eddying flakes became more abundant, dancing before my eyes; and the cold of the air more intense. At last, swiftly, one after the other, the white peaks of the distant hills vanished into blackness. The breeze grew to a moaning wind. I saw the black

central shadow of the eclipse sweeping toward me. In another moment the pale stars alone were visible. All else was rayless obscurity. The sky was absolutely black.

"A horror of this great darkness came upon me. The cold that smote to my marrow, and the pain I felt in breathing, overcame me. I shivered and a deadly nausea seized me. Then like a red-hot bow in the sky appeared the edge of the sun.

"I got off the Machine to recover myself. I felt giddy and incapable of facing the return journey. As I stood sick and confused I saw again the moving thing upon the shoal—there was no mistake now that it was a moving thing—against the red water of the sea. It was a round thing, of the size of a football perhaps, or bigger; it seemed black against the weltering blood-red water, and it was hopping fitfully about. Then I felt I was fainting. A terrible dread of lying helpless in that remote twilight sustained me while I clambered upon the saddle.

"So I came home. For a long time I must have been insensible upon the Machine. The blinking succession of the days and nights was resumed, the sun grew golden again, the sky blue. I breathed with greater freedom. The fluctuating contours of the land ebbed and flowed. The hands spun backward upon the dials. At last I saw again the dim shadows of homes, the evidences of decadent humanity. These, too, changed and passed, and others came. Presently when the millions dial was at zero I slackened speed, and began to recognize our own pretty and familiar architecture. The thousands hand ran back to the starting point, the night and day flapped slower and slower. Then the old walls of the laboratory came round me. Very gently now I diminished the pace of the mechanism.

"I saw one little thing that seemed odd to me. I think I have told you that when I set out, before my velocity became very high, Mrs. Watchett had walked across the room, traveling, as it seemed to me, like a rocket. As I returned I passed again across that minute when she traversed the laboratory. But now every motion appeared to be the exact inversion of her previous one. The door at the lower end opened and she glided quietly up the laboratory, back foremost, and disappeared behind the door by which she had previously entered.

"Then I stopped the Machine, and saw about me again the old familiar laboratory, my tools, my appliances, just as I had left them. I got off the thing very shakily and sat down upon my bench. For several minutes I trembled violently. Then I became calmer. Around me was my old workshop again, exactly as it had been. I might have slept there and the whole thing have been a dream.

"And yet not exactly. The thing had started from the southeast corner of the laboratory. It had come to rest again in the northwest, against the wall, where you will find it. That gives you the exact distance from my little lawn to the pedestal of the white sphinx.

"For a time my brain became stagnant. Presently I got up and came through the passage here, limping, because my heel was still painful, and feeling begrimed. I saw the *Pall Mall Gazette* on the table by the door. I found the date was indeed to-day, and looking at the timepiece, saw the hour was almost eight o'clock. I heard your voices and the clatter of plates. I hesitated—I felt so sick and weak. Then I sniffed good wholesome meat, and opened the door. You know the rest. I washed and dined, and now I am telling you the story.

"I KNOW," he said after a while, "that all this will be absolutely incredible to you, but to me the one incredible thing is that I am here to-night in this old familiar room, looking into your wholesome faces, and telling you all these strange adventures."

He looked at the Medical Man.

"No; I cannot expect you to believe it. Take it as a lie, or a prophecy. Say I dreamed it in the workshop. Consider I have been speculating upon the destinies of our race, until I have hatched this fiction. Treat my assertion of its truth as a mere stroke of art to enhance its interest. And taking it as a story, what do you think of it?"

He took up his pipe and began in his old accustomed manner to tap upon the bars of the grate.

CHAPTER XIV

After the Time Traveler's Story

THERE was a momentary stillness. Then chairs began to creak and shoes to scrape upon the carpet. I took my eyes off the Time Traveler's face and looked around at his audience. They were in the dark and little spots of color swam before them. The Medical Man seemed absorbed in the contemplation of our host. The Editor was looking hard at the end of his cigar—the sixth. The Journalist fumbled for his watch. The others as far as I remember were motionless.

The Editor stood up with a sigh.

"What a pity it is you're not a writer of stories!" he said, putting his hand on the Time Traveler's shoulder.

"You don't believe it?"

"Well——"

"I thought not." The Time Traveler turned round to us. "Where are the matches?" he said. He lit one and spoke over his pipe, puffing, "To tell you all the truth—I hardly believe it myself—and yet——"

His eyes fell with a mute inquiry upon the withered white flowers upon the little table. Then he turned over the hand holding his pipe, and I saw he was looking at some half healed scars on his knuckles.

The Medical Man rose, came to the lamp, and examined the flowers. "The gynœcium's odd," he said.

The Psychologist leaned forward to see, holding out his hand for a specimen.

"I'm hanged if it isn't a quarter to one," said the Journalist. "How shall we get home?"

"Plenty of cabs at the station," said the Psychologist.

"It's a curious thing," said the Medical Man; "but I certainly don't know the natural order of these flowers. May I have them?"

The Time Traveler hesitated. Then suddenly, "Certainly not."

"Where did you really get them?" said the Medical Man.

The Time Traveler put his hand to his head. He spoke like one who was trying to keep hold of an idea that eluded him. "They were put into my pocket by Weena—when I traveled into Time." He stared round the room. "I'm d——d if it isn't all going. This room and you and the atmosphere of everyday is too much for my memory. Did I ever make a Time Machine, or a model of a Time Machine, or is it all only a dream? They say life is a dream, a precious poor dream at times—but I can't stand another that won't fit. It's madness. And where did the dream come from? I must look at that Machine. If there *is* one."

He caught up the lamp swiftly and carried it flaring redly through the door into the corridor.

We followed him.

There in the flickering light of the lamp was the Machine, sure enough, squat, ugly, and askew, a thing of brass, ebony, ivory, and translucent, glimmering quartz. Solid to the touch—for I put out my hand and felt the rail of it—and with brown spot and smears upon the ivory and bits of grass and moss upon the lower parts, and one rail bent awry.

The Time Traveler put the lamp down on the bench, and ran his hand along the broken rail.

"It's all right now," he said. "The story I told you was true. I'm sorry to have brought you out here—in the cold."

He took up the lamp, and in an absolute silence we returned to the smoking-room.

The Time Traveler came into the hall with us and helped the Editor on with his coat. The Medical Man looked into our host's face and, with a certain hesitation, told him he was suffering from overwork, at which he laughed hugely. I remember him standing in the open doorway bawling good-night.

I shared a cab with the Editor. He thought the tale a "gaudy lie." For my own part I was unable to come to any conclusion about the matter. The story was so fantastic and incredible, the telling so credible and sober. I lay awake most of the night thinking about it. I determined to go next day and see the Time Traveler again.

I was told he was in the laboratory, and being on easy terms in the house I went up to him. The laboratory, however, was empty. I stared for a minute at the Time Machine and put out my hand and touched a lever. At that the squat, substantial-looking mass swayed like a bough shaken by the wind. Its instability startled me extremely, and I had a queer reminiscence of childish days when I used to be forbidden to meddle. I came back through the corridor. The Time Traveler met me in the smoking room. He was coming from the house. He had a small camera under one arm and a knapsack under the other. He laughed when he saw me and gave me an elbow to shake.

"I'm frightfully busy," he said; "with that thing in there."

"But is it not some hoax?" said I. "Do you really travel through Time?"

"Really and truly I do." And he looked frankly into my eyes.

He hesitated. His eye wandered round the room. "I only want half an hour," he said. "I know why you came, and it's awfully good of you. There's some magazines here. If you'll stop to lunch I'll prove this time traveling to you up to the hilt. Specimens and all. If you'll forgive my leaving you now?"

I consented, hardly comprehending then the full import of his words, and he nodded and went on down the corridor. I heard the door of the laboratory slam, seated myself in a chair, and took up the *New Review*. What was he going to do before lunch time? Then suddenly I was reminded by an advertisement that I had promised to meet Richardson the publisher at two. I looked at my watch, and saw I could barely save that engagement. I got up and went down the passage to tell the Time Traveler.

As I took hold of the handle of the door I heard an exclamation oddly truncated at the end, and a click and a thud. A gust of air whirled round me as I opened the door, and from within came the sound of broken glass falling on the floor. The Time Traveler was not there. I seemed to see a ghostly indistinct figure sitting in a whirling mass of black and brass for a moment, a figure so transparent that the bench behind with its sheets of drawings was absolutely distinct; but this phantasm I immediately perceived was illusory. The Time Machine had gone. Save for a subsiding stir of dust the central space of the laboratory was empty. A pane of the skylight had apparently just been blown in.

I felt an unreasonable amazement. I knew that something strange had happened, and for a moment could not distinguish what the strange thing might be. As I stood staring, the door into the garden opened, and the man-servant appeared.

We looked at each other. Then ideas began to come.

"Has Mr. —— gone out that way?" said I.

"No, sir. No one has come out this way. I was expecting to find him here."

At that I understood. At the risk of disappointing Richardson I remained waiting for the Time Traveler, waiting for the second, perhaps still stranger, story, and the specimens and photographs he would bring with him.

But I am beginning to fear now that I must wait a lifetime for that. The Time Traveler vanished three years ago. Up to the present he has not returned, and when he does return he will find his home in the hands of strangers and his little gathering of auditors broken up forever. Filby has exchanged poetry for playwriting, and is a rich man —as literary men go—and extremely unpopular. The Medical Man is dead, the Journalist is in India, and the Psychologist has succumbed to paralysis. Some of the other men I used to meet there have dropped as completely out of existence as if they, too, had traveled off upon some similar anachronisms. And so, ending in a kind of dead wall, the story of the Time Machine must remain for the present at least.

THE END.

The Man Who Died by Proxy

By FRANK GATES

(Concluded)

riveted upon it, we noticed that the finger nails had commenced to turn black.

"With a sickening smile, Dzerzhinsky turned to Dr. Levervitch and said, 'Well, I'm lucky that I have the greatest poison specialist in the world as my physician,' and asking the Doctor to leave with him, he bade us all good morning. I saw him several times after that, but he always wore gloves, and with every step he took, he seemed to be in the greatest agony; his face, that at no time had ever shown happiness, now was a picture of abject terror and frozen fear. Three weeks from that time we heard of his sudden death.

"Two months ago, upon my visit to New York, as I was coming out of the dining-room of the Hotel Ritz, whom should I see but Dr. Levervitch. I had not seen him since that day at the American Embassy in Moscow. He informed me that he had found out the reason for not having been asked to be present at the blood transfusion operation of Burton and Dzerzhinsky; the prison physician had been instructed by Dzerzhinsky that Burton was *not to be allowed to leave the operation table alive,* and the fear of Dzerzhinsky was such that the physician dared not disobey his orders.

"I remarked, 'Apparently you could not find a cure for Dzerzhinsky's terrible malady,' and as he looked me straight in the eye, he answered, *"I never tried.'"*

THE END.

Next Month

THE first story of our $500 Cover Prize Contest will be published in the next issue of AMAZING STORIES. You will remember the the contest which ran in our December issue, wherein the Editor had conceived a weird picture which adorned the front cover of that issue. Our readers were asked to write a story around this picture, and the contest was a most successful one, over 300 manuscripts having been received. The first prize winner is an excellent story that you will greatly enjoy. It is one of many interesting and original treatments of the subject.

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(1) ....

(2) ....

(3) ....

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(1) ....

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The SINGING WEAPON

By Bent Prout

It was as though his muscles had been changed into steel springs, drawing his bones the wrong way. The agony was insupportable. Without being able to let go, he still clutched the Vibranon in his left hand.

FEODORE KELINEV'S passionate desire to have his son Josef become a musician was one of those insignificant causes which produce most startling results. Its effect on the lives of both father and son during that crucial year of the Yellow Holocaust had long since been forgotten, but it was the real reason why both men came to play such an important part in the near-tragedy following the Asiatic invasion of 1945.

Three years before the war Josef was twenty-two. He had graduated from Columbia University with honors in mathematics and science. At his father's insistence he had paralleled his university course with violin instruction. But his heart had not been in this study, and when finally he came home with the coveted B.Sc. degree, Feodore personally took over the details of his son's further musical education.

Feodore at twenty had played with the Boston Symphony orchestra. A 'cellist, he loved music with all the fervor born of generations of Polish masters. That Josef had none of his intense feeling for music; that he preferred calculations and formulæ to the intricacies of an immemorial polonaise, was the old man's heaviest burden.

Josef, who loved his father and desired to please him, set his fine mind to the unpleasant task of learning to play the violin. He would practise for hours with his father at the piano coaching, exhorting, criticising, while his son played—always without feeling—like a cold mechanical automaton.

One hot day in August, 1943, Feodore reached the limit of his endurance. Josef could not catch the spirit of a finale which ended with a trill of high harmonics. Suddenly, the old man crashed both hands down on the piano keys and shouted: "Josef, you learn nothing. Always you do it the same. As a foolish donkey braying at the moon. Oh, if I could only show you. Here. Let me have the violin."

The old man rose and took the instrument in his thin, bluing hands. Like most 'cellists, he could play the violin, though being accustomed to the longer reach of the 'cello, the operation was laborious and often grotesque. He knew, however, what he wanted to hear, and as he played the approaching passages a smile of satisfaction crept over his features.

Up the ebony finger-board went dancing fingers while the bow steadily drew out the loved tones. The difficult passage was only a few notes away. Feodore felt that he was doing it exactly as he wished Josef to do it, and for the first time in months was really happy.

Softly the old man's fingers reached for the harmonic, produced by allowing the fingers to barely touch the string instead of pressing it down firmly. But here the hands, used to the feel of larger strings, became hesitant. They groped. The bow still grated over the string but no sound came.

Sweat poured from Feodore's forehead and a flush lifted over his gray-stubbled cheek. But he kept on.

Suddenly a note shrilled from the instrument. A queer squeak of a note which was so thin and harsh it set the nerves jangling.

And at the same instant, a curious thing happened.

Josef's mother, who had not been an artist but imbued with an artist's love for beauty had, while travelling almost the world over with Feodore, made a famous collection of Venetian glassware. Included in the collection were two vases she had prized most highly.

Since her death, Feodore had placed them on top of the piano as being the place they would least likely come to harm. He knew their value, and while he did not fully appreciate their iridescent beauty, he cherished them for their association with his wife.

As his groping fingers drew that weird harmonic from Josef's violin one of the precious vases cracked squarely in two, and one of the halves rolled off the edge of the piano top, clinked a couple of keys as it fell, and shattered on the floor.

Feodore was aghast at the accident. But Josef sprang into instant action.

"Father. For God's sake don't move your fingers. Try and make the same note again."

Feodore, startled by his son's command, did not move his fingers. But he hesitated to draw the bow over the string.

"Try it again I tell you." Josef's voice held that hard note of driving power which makes men hurl themselves to death at the desire of a leader, and the old man's resistance was weakend by a sort of terror. Mincingly he tried the note again.

The other vase, which Josef had hoped would crumble, rang with an answering note but did not break.

"Damn it. You didn't do it right. Try it again."

But Feodore had recovered himself and refused to make further attacks on the family heirlooms. Instead he began to bemoan the broken vase.

"Your mother thought a great deal of that pair of glasses. What would she say if she knew one of them was broken? And I didn't show you how to do the notes. I am sad, Josef, very sad."

But Josef apparently did not hear. He had taken up the violin and was reaching for the same harmonic. He found he could get the vase to resound to the note, but he could not break it. He tried other notes on other objects in the room. Once he found a note which made his father wince with pain.

"What the devil are you doing, Josef?" Feodore growled. "I could feel that sound tingle through

VIBRATION and sound are subjects as yet only slightly understood. Our scientific monthlies have shown us in many cases where it might be possible for a violinist, for instance, to shake down the Woolworth Building to the ground, merely by sounding a fundamental note on the violin continually.

Perhaps you yourself have seen strong glass panes shattered by ordinary sound which has been sustained for a long enough period, and which set up fundamental vibrations in the glass pane, finally shattering it.

In "The Singing Weapon" this scientific fact is made use of in a very plausible manner. That such a machine will come about at a not-too-distant time may be reasonably expected.

my whole body. For heaven's sake go out somewhere. I've been tortured enough."

Josef went but he carried in his mind one of the most potent germs of genius man has ever known. He had discovered through a music lesson an application of the principle which was to make him a national hero, a savior of his country, and finally a martyr to his own ingenuity.

He never took another music lesson. From that moment he devoted his every energy and thought to perfecting the idea which was to completely revolutionize warfare, which was to rid United States shores of its most successful enemy, and which was to place in the hands of the government a weapon so powerful as to make other wars impossible unless his own country should choose to wage them.

THE declaration of war on the United States by the United Asiatic nations came with the suddenness of a thunderclap. Newspapers announced it one Sunday in June, 1945. It found the country entirely unprepared, going about its accustomed business collecting the dollars, which it felt were enough to prevent other nations from daring any sort of an attack.

A month before the declaration of war a Washington *"Times-Union"* editorial writer said in part:

"Alarmists would have it that we are in danger from the yellow races. Woefully short-sighted as their trouble-making minds are, they do not see that war on the United States would be impossible for the reason that no nation has enough money to conduct war one year except ourselves. The United States Treasury holds the purse strings; which are the heartstrings of the world."

Nevertheless, the puppet refused to obey its string. War came. A new kind of war which descended with the implacable suddenness of a tornado. And it immediately appeared that the Asiatic nations would not need much money. At the rate it started, the war would be over in less than a year.

The first attack was launched at San Francisco, and a few hours later at the Panama canal.

As day broke over the San Francisco harbor, amazement was turned to horror as a fleet of ships appeared hovering just within sight of land. The ships were larger than any ever seen before, and were apparently so equipped that they were not affected by the heavy sea that was running toward land. They were as stationary as though piles had been sunk to the bottom of the ocean and they were resting on them.

From each of the warships a huge aeroplane rose and sailed out across the sky. There were a dozen of them.

Sleepily awakened from peace-time routine, crews of coast air defence batteries started firing. But the planes, despite shells breaking near them, made no effort to rise above range, and none of them seemed to be damaged in any way.

United States planes went out in gallant formation to meet the enemy. But they could not fly in that barrage, and the others could.

Over the city, the enemy planes seemed to halt in mid-air. Observers on the ground thought something had happened to them, and that they would soon come tumbling to earth. Then it became obvious they were equipped with helicopters enabling them to remain stationary in the air, and aim their bombs with the same accuracy as if they were shooting them from a fixed position. Each one of them sent a bomb hurtling to the ground.

But there was no thundering explosion, no upheaval of earth, no mangled bodies thrown into the air. For a few seconds there was a hiss of escaping gas, an acrid odor, and death all around.

Within five minutes there was no vestige of life anywhere within a radius of 2,000 yards of each bomb. The gas seemed almost under control, as though some evil spirit in each steel container was directing it to destroy.

A dog, frightened by the first bomb as it fell, was the first victim. He started to run madly. The gas caught up with him. He coughed once and dropped dead in his tracks.

Persons running out of houses to see what it was all about, fell before they could regain their homes. Pedestrians, running for cover, were caught before they could reach the shelter which would not have protected them.

About fifty bombs were dropped over the more congested districts of the city. Then the planes moved gracefully away, back to the decks of their mother ships.

The ships, as impervious to bombardment from the coast batteries as the planes to anti-aircraft guns, weighed anchor and steamed away.

The lives of 50,000 were lost in San Francisco alone within half an hour. Within another hour the Panama canal zone was cleared of life and its locks and mechanisms left to be manned by little yellow men already trained for the work by spies.

Panic stricken, a stream of harried refugees poured inland as fast as transportation could be devised. They left their dead behind.

News-gathering organizations, filling the Eastern press with column after column of the horror, declared that the enemy could not be repulsed for the reason that ships and planes were protected against gun-fire by magnetic shields. Bullets and the steel of bursting shells were deflected by an invisible screen before they could do any damage.

No wonder the planes were not disturbed by anti-aircraft guns, or that the ships were not routed by the supposedly invincible coast defence. No wonder the enemy was content with the ravages of a couple of hours, and had withdrawn to rest upon his laurels.

Everyone began to conjecture what the next move would be. They were not long kept in ignorance.

The attack was scarcely over long enough for word of it to reach Washington when a wireless telephone signal from an unknown source was received by the operator at the Capitol. A voice asked for a connection with Secretary of War Roger L. Bates.

The United Asiatic nations wished to negotiate with United States officials.

Secretary Bates called a hurried meeting of the Cabinet, and those members available gathered be-

fore the radio instrument in the war office. The connection was tuned in.

"I am the spokesman of the Asiatic powers," a voice said without trace of foreign accent. "You have seen what we are able to do. The Pacific coast is completely at our mercy. The Panama canal is in our hands, and at this moment our ships are going through. Lightning cannot strike more quickly, or more furiously than our bombs. We are ready, however, to offer peace."

The voice stopped. The statesmen, facing a crisis far beyond their wildest dreams, looked uncomfortable. The voice came again.

"Do you wish to hear our terms?"

"What are they?" Secretary Bates managed to ask.

"As simple as is our ability to extort them," came the rapid answer; "we demand the same right in your beautiful country as you extend to Europeans. We further demand indemnity of ten million dollars a year for twenty years to defray our war costs, and to pay for past indignities suffered by our people through your ridiculous discriminations."

At the first clause of the terms, the dignitaries gathered around the radio receiver had shown evidence of relief. Money had not been mentioned. But as the last clause became clear, their faces hardened.

It was on Bates' lips to shout: "You can go to Hell!" but he restrained himself. Visions of the unburied dead in San Francisco came hazily to his mind. Yet he wondered how long the country could stand against such a foe, if it could at all.

"Ask for two days' grace," one of the members whispered.

"We will grant it," immediately came the ambassador's voice. "But at 2 o'clock, exactly forty-eight hours hence, we will call again. Your answer will either release further furies against your helplessness, or you will be granted peace. Good-bye."

With a scarcely audible click, the instrument went dead.

News of the parley buzzed over the country's telegraph system. At first it caused nothing but consternation. Then a determined desire not to be bullied swept over the nation.

AT Washington those minds free from political and financial pollution galvanized into action. A plan of defence began to take shape amazingly soon.

President Burton gave the final decision to the press a few hours before the sea-flung radio query reached the Capitol. In an address before the senate he said:

"We shall not be intimidated. A nation of successful fighters, which bought its very right to be a nation with its blood, will stand. Our answer to the Asiatics will be: 'We fight!'"

There was no answer to this ultimatum as it sped over the desolated Pacific coast homes to the waiting yellow ears.

It would, then, be war.

When, the following day, enemy ships appeared off Sandy Hook, ready to send their death dealing planes over New York City, there was no such scene as had occurred three days before inside the Golden Gate.

Guns were silent as the helicopters rose from their moorings on the great vessels. Over toward the city they came, flying low and confidently, Just past the bottle neck of the world-famous harbor came the first answer to the enemy overture.

A heavy anti-aircraft gun spoke sharply from Governor's island.

A puff of smoke showed over the on-coming squadron. They kept on.

Six guns roared at the same time, and six shells burst nearer the planes. The range was not yet reached, and the flyers were not proof against gas as well as shrapnel.

A second salvo and one of the planes wavered in the air. A second later it was obviously out of control, then like a wounded plover, it came crashing to the water.

The Asiatic planes, fortified against flying metal, could not defend themselves against a highly concentrated belch of carbon-monoxide gas which immediately quenched their motors and filled the lungs of the operators with its deadly fumes.

One of the planes escaped the barrage and climbed out of range. Over the city it dropped three bombs. One fell in Times Square, killing 200 persons. The other two took a lesser toll in surrounding neighborhoods.

Meanwhile gas shells were hurled out over the water toward the enemy ships. One took effect and the ship, its officers either killed or prostrated, were unable to prevent its ramming another ship which went to the bottom. The others withdrew.

If the San Francisco disaster had been repeated in the eastern city the country might have been obliged, through force of public opinion, to accede to the enemy's demands. But this was at least a moral victory, and the country cheered itself into settling down for a prolonged fight.

The yellow holocaust came back with more planes and more ships. It seemed that from their limitless wastes of coolie lands they had evolved more ships than might be found in the rest of the world. The ships carried planes, and the planes bore deadly gas. They could only be repelled by gas.

The United States was obliged to simply put itself on the defensive. Soldiers were not required, but hosts of civilians had to be impresesd into munition factories. A curtain of searchlights had to be installed on both coast lines to prevent night attacks. There was a frenzied call for more aeroplanes . . . more battleships . . . more capital.

At the end of six months the enemy was pressing further and further inland. By the end of October a crisis impended. In St. Louis, whither the national Capitol had been removed for safety, every face was sad with lost hope and weariness. Then, with even more startling effect than when Jeanne d'Arc appeared at the head of her mailed troops in France centuries before, Josef Kelinev appeared, to rescue the nation from ignominy.

ON the day war was declared in June, 1945, Josef Kelinev read the account at his 6 o'clock breakfast. He had just taken a bite of his

orange when he looked at the headlines of his paper.

His jaws ceased chewing, and his hands trembled as he spread the page before him. He drank in the details of the stupendous announcement and forgot the rest of his meal. He ran up stairs to his father's room.

Feodore was still in bed when Josef burst into his room and thrust the newspaper under his sleepy eyes. "For God's sake, read that." Was all Josef said.

When the import of the news had penetrated Feodore's early morning perception, he too became visibly excited.

"Josef, my boy, we've got to hurry," he said as he piled out of bed and sought clothing. "We'll have to work fast. Either we succeed very quickly or there'll be little use of success. Go on up to the laboratory. I'll be up in a second."

Josef climbed rapidly to the attic of the house.

Here he and his father, music and vases forgotten, had toiled weeks and weeks on an idea, trying to convert it into something tangible, workable. It had taken a great deal of persuasion on Josef's part to convince his father that perfection of this idea was more important than learning the exact technique of the violin. But finally the old man had caught the son's enthusiasm and had lent assistance to Josef's dream.

Feodore, as a child in Poland, had learned the machinist's trade. He had become skillful, with music as his hobby, when the two vocations had reversed themselves in order of importance in his mind. He always liked to work with his hands, however, and had often thought that, next to music, he best loved the sight and touch and smell of metal being moulded and fashioned into machines.

So he had become the artisan of his son's ingenuity.

The discovery Josef had made in the music room months before was not a new one, but it had suggested new possibiities. When Feodore's discordant note on the violin had cracked the Venetian vase, Josef realized that here was a power which, properly applied, would become a leviathan. It was the power of vibration.

With this in mind, Josef had at first experimented with the violin. Hours at a time he had tried to coax out odd notes which would react on objects in the room. Finally he succeeded in finding a note which cracked the other of his mother's vases, and then he felt he had the secret within his grasp.

Feodore equipped a small machine shop in the attic and father and son worked together, the old man not always comprehending what he did nor why, except that Josef was enthusiastic, until, the day before war was declared, the first Vibranon was completed.

This morning, spurred by the news of war, they would test the device. If it worked. . . .

The model Josef had constructed consisted essentially of a thin piece of brass tubing, about two feet long, with one end closed. Over the open end was arranged a bridge and peg mechanism which would hold at any degree of tautness a thin wire string similar to that of a mandolin. The string when set in motion by a bow, would set up vibrations of the column of air in the tube sending out any given number of vibrations a second into the air.

Josef had reasoned that every material known has a so-called period of vibration. If that were ascertained, and he could induce a similar vibration in the air, molecular motion in the other object would ensue.

The war news was scarcely four hours old when Josef and his father proved their theory correct.

The day before, Josef had procured a plate of glass about three feet square. While waiting for his father to come up to the workroom he carefully checked all the measurements of the glass, and by a rapid calculation determined its period of vibration.

Feodore entered the room and Josef immediately picked up the Vibranon. He inspected the tiny, hair-like string drawn over the end of the tube and strummed it with his finger. An extremely shrill, eerie note tinkled on the air.

The tone was not exactly right, so he turned the adjustment a trifle and picked the string again.

Then he took up an old violin bow, from which all the hairs but three had been removed and rubbed it gently on a cake of resin.

He was now ready for the test.

Holding the instrument in his right hand, he softly drew the bow over the string with his left.

A faint, silvery musical note reached the ear. It was scarcely audible, and was so keen it seemed rather to be felt than heard.

No effect on the glass, standing against the workbench was discernible.

Again Josef bowed the string.

This time Feodore, eyes glued to the glass, started forward.

"It vibrated, Josef," he breathed. "Keep it up."

At the fourth stroke of Josef's bow the plate glass shattered in a dozen pieces.

That moment the two men knew their efforts had not been in vain. They could not have possibly comprehended the far reaching influence their device would have, but both felt instinctively they had probed an unexplored secret.

The next day an order was issued for the evacuation of New York by all civilians not occupied with government work. The city, according to the press, would not be in danger of attack for two days but by the end of that time any person left would be in immediate danger.

Josef and his father packed their laboratory equipment and a few personal effects and were among the first to obtain rail passage out of the city. They went to a farmhouse ten miles out of St. Louis and settled there to the work of perfecting the Vibranon to a point where it might be effectively demonstrated to the government.

THREE months to a day after the Yellow Menace had first sunk its talons into United States territory, Josef went with his invention to the National Capitol. He went because he felt he had the country's salvation in his hands if he could get help to perfect the device he was so sure could be made into an effective weapon.

Clothes shabby and unkempt, eyes sunk in their

sockets from hard work and loss of sleep, Josef entered the temporary offices of the Secretary of War. He passed through an outer office to a smaller one. He wanted to go direct to Secretary Bates. He thought the Vibranon would be welcomed with open arms.

In the office, sitting behind a desk, was a middle aged man, short, bald and with whiskers. From pictures he had merely glanced at, Josef thought he must be facing the Secretary of War. He started presenting his message without further ado.

"I have come, Sir," he said respectfully, "to show you a way to bring this war to a close. With your help I can perfect this instrument to the point where it will be the most powerful agent of warfare ever known." He laid his long thin black case on the desk.

The man he had addressed looked up sharply from some papers. At first he looked annoyed, then an indulgent smile spread unpleasantly over his features.

"Mister," he said finally, "You're only one of hundreds. They all know how to stop the war—or think they do. We're far too busy around here to listen to any more twaddle."

"Are you Secretary of War Bates?" Josef demanded.

"Are you Thomas Edison reincarnated?" the man snapped. "Come now. Go along with you before I have to call the guard."

A sudden shock of anger swept Josef's whole body. The man was laughing at him, had called him an impostor. The guard would come and throw him out of the office. Very well then, he would go. He would take his idea to the enemy where it would be appreciated. Unreasoning anger blinded him, but only for a moment.

He was thinking he would leave and try again later when suddenly a buzzer sounded.

"Come on—hurry and get out. The Secretary is calling." Josef's nemesis suddenly revealed his servility, and Josef determined to wait and see the secretary.

"I came to see Mr. Bates," Josef said. He sat down opposite the desk.

"By God, you won't stay. I'll call. . . ." The buzzer rang again.

The doorman ducked nervously into the inner office.

With the discovery he had only been talking to an outer office man, Josef planned to recourse to strenuous means to get through the door barring him from success. He quickly snapped open the case containing his Vibranon. A second he surveyed the section of plate glass dividing the two offices. Then he made an adjustment and took up his bow.

At the first piercing stroke the window shattered in its frame and the fragments clattered to the floor.

Secretary Bates himself came to see what was the matter. His officeman followed, anger written over his every feature. Josef was still holding the Vibranon in his hands when they stepped out.

"Say, you, are you crazy, or what? Haven't we trouble enough around here without your. . . ."

The irate watchdog stopped suddenly as the Secretary of War placed a hand on his shoulder.

"Just a minute, John." The voice was full of tolerance. "This fellow seems to have something to say, and I think I'll listen."

Josef followed the tall figure of the cabinet member into the inner sanctum.

He remained closeted with the official three hours, while the office was besieged with dispatch officers, generals, and statesmen who fumed in the outer office while Josef unfolded his plan.

When he came out he was smiling.

Josef was obliged to give one more demonstration before the War Office was finally convinced. It took place before Secretary Bates and a grizzled old West Point general, something of an inventor himself. Plates of glass were broken at will, and the Vibranon theory explained. When the test was over, the general involuntarily took Josef's hand.

"Young man," he said, "the country is at your feet." And Josef knew his goal was almost reached.

Everything Josef could possibly need to perfect his device with the greatest possible speed was placed at his disposal: money, machines, men. He and his father took charge, and a few men whose interest in science qualified them, were detailed to be Josef's personal assistants.

The first object was to build a Vibranon large enough to test its fitness as a weapon. In less than three weeks the model was completed and ready for trial.

The Vibranon was taken to a deserted artillery range which had been placed under guard. Aside from a few men to shift the targets, the only persons present with Josef were his father, Secretary Bates and the old general.

As they reached the field, Josef noticed an old suspension foot-bridge over a stream half a mile from their station. He pointed it out.

"If I can destroy that bridge, we will all know that the Vibranon is a success."

With the first few notes of the weapon there was no apparent effect on the bridge. Then the supporting cables began to sway gently as if caught by a breeze. Coaxing the swinging motion with vibrations of increased length, Josef finally produced such a movement in the cables that they broke away from their foundations and the bridge collapsed.

THE nation had been terrorized by its invaders about six months when six Vibranons were pronounced ready for action. Their manufacture had been clothed with the utmost secrecy. Aside from a very select few, no one knew what they were or what they were for.

The first use of them, it was decided, would be on the Atlantic. The instrument would be carried on one of the new electric motored airplanes which could move almost as noiselessly as a bird through the air, land either on sea or earth, complete their mission, and be off again. The planes had been made possible by the invention of a new type of storage battery combining the virtues of lightness and compactness with a charging capacity which enabled it to cover hundreds of miles without recharging.

One of these planes, a Vibranon mounted on the

upper wing, would fly out among the enemy ships, drop to the water and attack.

Josef himself insisted on going to operate it. He scouted the suggested dangers and his importance at the helm of the enterprise, but he was obdurate. He would, himself, taste the fruits of first blood, or the aloes of failure.

One night about 11 o'clock the plane left its hangar. Two hours later it was at seaboard where it landed to make arrangements for the searchlight curtain to be lifted while they passed, and again for their return. Then the expedition moved on.

The fleet was not hard to find. The plane settled almost noiselessly about a mile distant, and rode lazily on its pontoons, easily within striking distance.

The tube of the Vibranon hung suspended from a scaffold over the aeroplane wing. Taking his bow, Josef climbed to a place from which he could reach the adjusting mechanism and the string.

For a moment he toyed with the instrument, then began operating it.

The first intimation he had that damage was done to the enemy was when one of the nearer vessels suddenly seemed to spring to life. Flood lights appeared at bow and stern, and men could be seen running along the decks.

Josef continued fiddling without changing the tone of the Vibranon.

Confusion became evident among the bustling figures on the boat. They seemed to be all trying to reach safety in one of the helicopter planes when instantly, as though a huge rock had been dropped from the sky to its deck, the vessel flattened out on the water. Lights went out and across the distance came a faint sound of drowning cries.

The ship, vibrated from keel to mast, and simply fell to pieces.

Josef tightened a screw and sent a new note out across the wreckage. He bowed with a silent intensity, face grim, but with an exultant gleam in his eyes.

Another ship crumpled with a roar of burst boilers which sounded like the growl of an angry lion hidden in a deep cave.

Aboard the other vessels terror such as can only come to men faced with some mysterious unseen foe brought about pandemonium. Officers vainly strove to pacify the men. Always the question: "What is it?" answered their threats and their orders. An evil thing from the sky, accompanied only by a wavering, high pitched musical note was tearing the very decks from beneath their feet.

A third ship, wracked and torn by the quivering of its steel, collapsed and sunk.

Then the officer in command gave orders for the fleet to get away from the place as fast as churning propellors would take it.

Josef climbed back down from his perch to the cockpit of the plane and ordered his pilot to fly back to the base.

Before daybreak, five other planes equipped with Vibranons left St. Louis for enemy concentrations.

DESPITE efforts on the part of the war department to keep Josef's accomplishment a secret, bits of the news leaked out. It was not generally known what had routed the Asiatic fleet from off Sandy Hook, but that something had been done became general knowledge. It served to change an attitude of dogged resignation to one of hope throughout the country.

The raid by the other five Vibranons was fairly successful. A warning had been sent out to all the Asiatic fleets on both seaboards to be on the lookout for a strange terror which would come unexpectedly, but which could only be escaped by flight. At least one ship in each group, however, was sunk, and one of the Vibranon operators ordered his plane in pursuit of the vessels which had fled and was able to destroy another before being obliged to return to land.

Josef might have been satisfied that production of a quantity of Vibranons would end the war in time. But he wanted more. He wanted it all to end quickly. . . . he felt that he could perfect his weapon so that it would kill as well as destroy.

While others proceeded to equip more and more planes with Vibranons and teach men to use them, Josef busied himself with further experiments.

Often while working on models, he had felt the physical effect of some note twanging from one of the instruments. He knew that bones could vibrate, and felt furthermore that the proper note would cause muscular contraction. If the instrument could be made to vibrate at the proper pitch, spines could be broken, heads caved-in and hearts stopped by a simple musical note.

In order that the Vibranon could be made a killing weapon, its range must be increased and a pitch developed which would only affect muscle and bone substances. Furthermore some arrangement would have to be made to prevent the killing of friend as well as enemy.

Captain Rothstein, who had made a number of valuable suggestions to Josef during their association with the Vibranon, undertook to take care of lengthening the range and he also answered the last problem as soon as it was suggested by Josef. "Why that's simple enough," he said. "The enemy as a whole is composed of men much smaller than our average . . . about your size, Josef. If you could learn how to kill them with a note, the same vibration wouldn't affect our own men. All we would have to do then would be to have all small men ordered out of range and then shoot away."

Josef went on from this starting point. His next problem was to find specimens on which to experiment. War prisoners were suggested, but permission to sacrifice them could not be obtained. As a last resort, cadavers were supplied and it was this fact which probably cost Josef his life.

One day Josef drew a bow over the tiniest Vibranon he had ever constructed. A corpse hanging suspended in a sort of framework ten feet away seemed to shudder as the note went out. But no bones were broken and Josef could not tell what other effect it had had on the body.

It was late afternoon. He was tired out with his labors, and was discouraged. So he decided to go home and rest.

He tried to relax while he ate dinner, but the

nervous tension due to his extreme ambition for success kept him keyed up and nervous.

He went to bed and tossed for hours, wide awake. Finally he dressed and went back to the workshop.

The building was deserted except for the guards around it. A husky soldier at the front entrance, recognizing Josef, told him there was not a soul in the building.

Josef went into his inner workroom and switched on the lights. The corpse he had used a few hours before still swung from its frame, but under the ghastly stare of powerful lamps, its face seemed to have acquired a sickly grimace.

The inventor hesitated for a second looking at the yellow face as if its death grin had warned him to go back to his bed. Then he went grimly over and picked up the newest Vibranon. Almost mechanically he tightened the string a little and reached for the bow.

At the first quiver of the string Josef felt a wracking pain shoot through his body. He grew immediately as rigid as if suddenly cast in metal. He could still think and feel and see, but he could not move. It was as though his muscles had been changed into steel springs drawing his bones the wrong way. The agony was insupportable. Without being able to let go he still clutched the Vibranon in his left hand.

He began to feel nauseated, then a numbness crept over his senses. He teetered back and forth like a wooden soldier tipped on its base.

He knew his end had come. What he had hoped to do to others he had done to himself. If only he could tell that it was the Vibranon which had killed him. If they could only know that the instrument he held was tuned exactly to the killing pitch. If only he could make sure they would know how to use it.

Darkness swam before his eyes. His breath was almost stopped. The springs were holding his lungs pressed so tightly together they could draw in no air. He felt himself falling. With a supreme effort of will power, he forced his body to the right as he fell, so that the Vibranon hung safely in the air when they found him the next morning. The handle was partly crushed with the intensity of his grip.

Captain Rothstein knew the second he entered the room what had happened. And before any but Josef's father, who also understood, could come, he had carefully pried open the cold stiff fingers and drawn out the precious weapon.

Within two weeks the war was over. The Asiatics were scientists themselves but they were beaten at their own game when their air pilots, flying out of range of the gas shells, and their sailors seeing ships sink from under them found themselves victims of a new kind of death. They could find no defence. They were killed as fast as they came until they offered terms of surrender.

ON the day peace was declared, Feodore Kelinev crept out to Josef's grave carrying a violin case. It was bitter cold and Feodore wore no overcoat. Beside the mound of fresh earth which covered all his hopes, the old man drew out Josef's old violin.

Teeth chattering, and fingers blue with cold, he raised it to his chin and played. It was the old finale which Josef had not been able to master. Oblivious to the cold, Feodore played the notes leading up to that fateful harmonic. He reached the note. Part of the bow length scraped without sound, then the note came clear, perfect, full of volume. With a cry of anguished triumph, the old man threw wide his arms and collapsed over the grave.

THE END.

LIGHT OF LIFE

THE Disk of Day, a lonely star,
  Shines in the Milky Way
And leads its Eight through spatial fate
  A million miles a day.

As on it sweeps with never fear
  Of blackened suns or bright,
Its splendors ray the dotted day
  Of universal night.

To all the speeding stars that form
  A vast white wheel of light,
It flashes hope, as on they slope
  Through everlasting night.

And though the earth at last may know
  The *why* no man can say,
The spinning sun will not be done
  For eons and a day.

—By LELAND S. COPELAND

The MAN WHO WAS

~By Walter Burch~

Only two plain benches, on which sat twenty witnesses, prevented the sense of utter emptiness in the death chamber . . . . In a few seconds, Richard was fastened to the chair with a strap that passed around his body, under his arms and over his chest.

I.

The Execution

RICHARD AMES walked to the electric chair with steady step. As he passed the pallid group of prison officials, press representatives and personal friends, assembled as witnesses to the infliction of the death penalty, he spoke in a well rounded voice, without a tremor. There was an air of the casual in his greeting—as if there might be other to-morrows. Whether this attitude was assumed to relieve his friends of the sorrows incident to such a tragic scene, or bespoke some secret confidence, it was obvious that he was the most self-possessed individual in the room. All were his friends; even the prison officials had learned to esteem him, notwithstanding the incriminating verdict, and shared with the newspaper men, who fought so valiantly for executive leniency, the abiding conviction that justice was being miscarried—a conviction that magnified the horrors of the spectacle they were about to behold. However, although confronted by the inevitable, life seemed more nearly normal in Richard Ames than in any of the spectators.

During a year of incarceration, while his case was pending on appeal and petitions for clemency were being presented to the Governor, Richard paced the floor of his cell like a caged animal, berating his ill-luck in becoming entangled in a web of apparently invincible suspicion. As he grew embittered against society, friends tried to comfort him with assurance of hope that the Court would grant a new trial, and, if it was refused, that the Governor would commute his sentence, not merely in deference to his many friends, but through humanitarian considerations, in the belief that the death penalty would not be inflicted where conviction rested solely on circumstantial evidence; but as long as there remained hope for either of these remedies, Richard was hopeless. However, when both judicial and executive relief had been denied, his despondency gave way to expectancy. Was this transformation merely resignation to an inevitable fate? Was it but preparatory to that future life which constitutes the greater hope of all? Had he submerged temporal ambitions in the hope of eternity? Whether so or not, Richard passed to the chair with perfect composure and, having examined it carefully, took his seat as if merely a party to an interesting experiment.

OUR lives are strangely interwoven with the intangible thing which we are pleased to call "law." If you are once pronounced dead, you are not only dead unto yourself, but dead to society. This is decreed by law. If, through some circumstances, you should become alive again, after having been pronounced dead, many surprising things are apt to happen, most of which are liable to prove unpleasant. Our new author, being a legal expert himself, presents the case in a most fascinating manner, not only highly interesting, but correct from the legal end of it. Inasmuch as the case is neither fantastic nor impossible, it not only makes extremely plausible reading, but is highly instructive as well.

No one could have answered these queries but Richard himself, with the possible exception of Doctor Grant, whose friendship for Richard dated from infancy. Born upon adjacent farms, Richard Ames and Robert Grant attended grade and high schools together, were classmates at college, and during those days not only exchanged confidences with respect to their life careers, but unconsciously revealed to each other those innate soul qualities which constitute human character. Each qualified for his life's work by a thorough technical training, Richard as an engineer and Robert as a physician, and each had attained success in his chosen field, partly through native genius, but chiefly because that genius was directed by those principles of character which had welded their friendship.

Success had come to Richard, not as a flower blooming in the night, but after ten years of diligent toil and faithful service. He had passed through a period of privation with dauntless courage, but his mastery of detail and comprehension of business needs at last won the attention of the "captains of industry" and brought him proportionate rewards, which, by judicious investment, rapidly grew into a fortune, with the result that he was rated in the millionaire class.

The fidelity which characterized his professional labors, also marked his affairs of the heart. Although he was a prize coveted by ambitious mothers of eligible daughters, who were of great wealth and high social rank, he remained true to the romance of youth. During the years of his privation, Ruth Wilson faithfully waited, dreaming his dreams of success, and now that those dreams were realized, he brought to his magnificent city home the sweetheart of his boyhood days, to live in greater grandeur than he had even hoped for in the days of his boyish fancy. They were happy as the months rolled by, and then happier, for she was in a state of expectant motherhood. Then the arrest and conviction! Now the execution! Crime had left its stigma upon a faithful wife and innocent babe, born since its father's imprisonment; yet Richard Ames walked to the electric chair with an air of confidence and hope—

Hope of what?

II.

The Fight For Life

THE answer to this query may or may not be found in the career and service of Doctor Grant. He, likewise, had achieved success, first as a medical practitioner, then as an operating surgeon, and finally in the realm of scientific research. Wealth had been subordinated by him to the great concept of service; nevertheless, his income had been sufficient to justify the purchase of a luxuriant home in one of the most exclusive residential districts and a magnificent country estate on the banks of the Hudson, in addition to equipping one of the most complete physiological laboratories on the western continent, dedicated to the cause of humanity as an aid to his fellow practitioners.

His aptitude for chemical *formulae* quickly established his leadership as an adviser to other physicians, which won for him the sobriquet of "the physician's physician." Experimentation with living tissues, the development of cultures and

corresponding serums, the analysis of toxic substances—these and kindred activities kept him in touch with current medical problems. Through vivisection and other practical tests he witnessed the progress and effect of disease upon living organisms, and studied the action of drugs and chemicals upon the various bodily organs, being thereby enabled to formulate their prescription for human treatment, with the result that his conclusions were accepted as the expression of the highest medical authority.

Supervision over this large health plant, which occupied several floors of one of the large office buildings, was a man's full-sized job. The establishment was overwhelmed with work. It was a sort of clearing house for the world's ailments where the battle against disease was being waged by the leaders of the medical profession. At this juncture, however, when he had attained unquestioned supremacy, the scientific world was mystified by the announcement that Doctor Grant had withdrawn from the active management of the institution, and retired to his country home, where he would conduct secret experimentation upon a matter of vital interest to medical science.

There was much speculation among his professional intimates concerning his action. Contrary to his custom, there were no invited guests at his country home, no dinner parties, no festivities of any kind; a mysterious solitude surrounded him. However, it was rumored that he spent much time trapping living animal specimens, and the conclusion grew that this apparent diversion was in reality an important link in some new scientific chain he was forging. The seclusion in which he conducted his experiments only added to the world's expectancy. Was that expectancy a mere fancy? Was his voluntary isolation a dedication to science through love of science, or was it merely a chapter in the romance of life?

Personal intimacy had given Doctor Grant an insight into the motivating forces of Richard's life, which forbade even the suspicion of guilt. "The deed of which he is accused is incompatible with his character," said the Doctor, "and, therefore, some other person is the criminal." The logic of the conclusion was self-satisfying, but even logic must yield to the force of judicial decrees, and when the fateful news came that a new trial had been denied and the Governor indicated his hostility to clemency, Doctor Grant resolved to throw the full force of his personality into the fight for life—or rather, the fight against death! He would fight with every instrument within his reach. He would suspend the very laws of Nature, if it were within the possibilities of scientific achievement, to defeat such manifest miscarriage of justice.

The proximity of his country home to the great penal institution at Sing Sing, a three hours' drive from the State Capitol—where he made frequent trips as an intercessor, made it the logical center of his intended operations. Remote from traveled thoroughfares and under private guard, it afforded greater privacy for research work than the crowded rooms of his city laboratory. What took place within its secret chambers, however, can only be guessed from subsequent disclosures; but certain it is that Doctor Grant felt that he was on the eve of the most colossal discovery of the ages—a discovery so prodigious in possibilities, for evil as well as for good, that it was difficult for him to determine which he most feared—failure or success!

Governor Manning was not hard-hearted, but he was decidedly hard-headed when confronted by duty. He refused to yield to his own sympathetic impulses with an air of finality that no longer left open to doubt the ultimate fate of the accused. "There must be finality to the courts' decisions," he said, "if the criminal element is to be curbed, and this cannot be realized as long as governors use their powers of clemency to nullify the verdicts of juries and judgments of our courts, thereby causing prospective criminals to hope for leniency in case of their detection and conviction. The door of hope must be closed to the man who plans crime."

Further efforts for leniency seemed futile, as not a single incriminating circumstance pointed to the door of the real murderer, if Richard had not committed the crime, and faint hope remained for the discovery of new evidence within the thirty days left before the execution. Only a miracle could save him, and while wife and friends fervently prayed for that miracle to come to pass, the ingenuity of the medical profession was being secretly pitted against the genius of the law. Which was destined to win?

III.

Preparing for Death

THE remainder of Richard's life was uneventful, except as a fruitful topic for speculation on account of its association with the activities of Doctor Grant, whose secretive methods had caused him to become known as the Man of Mystery. The changed mental attitude of Richard, heretofore noted, added to the sense of mystery. His sudden and almost buoyant optimism became a source of much philosophizing among students of criminology. If he entertained any bitterness of heart on account of his fate, he successfully concealed it. Significant also was the utter lack on his part of that spiritual preparation which is common among occupants of the death cell. Doctor Grant was his only comforter and it was noticeable that after each visit Richard was exuberant in spirit. Had the stern reality of death become to him the "greatest adventure of life," to which he looked forward with pleasurable anticipation? Or, did he share with his adviser some secret that might still rescue him? Was his indifference a mere mask—his calmness an expression of hope? One might have inferred such to be his state of mind, had it not been for the amazing announcement that followed.

A few days previous to his execution, Richard made known the provisions of his will, which left his estate in equal shares to his widow, child and brother. He was content with its provisions, but expressed a desire to add a codicil thereto, relating to the disposition of his body. As a convicted criminal, known in the law as *civiliter mortuus*, meaning that he was civilly dead, his right to

change its provisions could have been challenged, but being in the nature of a dying request, not affecting the validity of the original instrument, his wish was respected and in the presence of the usual witnesses the following codicil was duly executed.

"It is my dying wish that my body be delivered to Doctor Robert Grant, my most faithful friend, immediately after death, to be used by him for the purpose of scientific experimentation, in such manner as he may desire."

(Signed) Richard Ames.

The above request was the breakfast topic of the nation the following day, for those present quickly sensed its news value. The ink had scarcely dried on Richard's signature before the wires were carrying to the world this weird development in a case whose history had been a series of the unusual. It was "front page stuff," because it was at variance with the customary treatment of the dead, upon the propriety of which the majority of readers, perhaps unconsciously, had formed opinions of the most positive character. The common beliefs of mankind find expression in their customs, not as the result of conscious thought based on abstract principles, but through those unconscious deductions from daily observation and experience which find lodgment in the subconscious faculties of the mind. These deductions remain quiescent as long as events follow a regular course, but react intuitively against any departure from the normal. The novelty of Richard's request, therefore, brought it in conflict with this quality of human nature, because respect for the dead is an almost universal sentiment, whose degree is measured only by the awe in which death itself is held. Hence, the public resented a proposal that shocked their moral sensibilities, for the friendship of Richard and Doctor Grant had been portrayed in such idealistic terms that the suggestion seemed grotesque and served only to magnify the element of the mysterious that had enveloped the case from its inception.

The language of the codicil clearly indicated that Richard expected death, and that hope for executive intervention had been abandoned by him. However, when the element of mystery attaches to a situation, the tendency of the public is to preserve it, even if the plainest facts must be rejected in their most obvious sense to coincide with preconceived theories. So it was in this case, for the publication of the codicil was construed by many as a heroic pose—a mere gesture—a last bid for sympathy. The Governor himself is said to have adopted this theory and to have remarked rather gruffly— "We have had enough of 'grandstand play'; if he wants scientific experiment, I will see that he gets it."

The disposition of Richard's body, however, was not wholly within his determination, for under the law and prison rules Doctor Grant was required to obtain the consent of Richard's wife. Fearing the effect of such a grewsome request upon her, they approached the task with great hesitation, anticipating resistance which might prove an insuperable barrier to the consummation of their plans, but the reputation of the case for the unusual was to be sustained when, contrary to their expectations, she replied: "Yes; I gladly consent, for I would rather see his body used in scientific experiment than lie in the tomb of a felon."

The interview was at an end. Tomorrow was the fateful day. The time had come to say farewell—that last farewell between husband and wife, with its indescribable anguish of heart, its bitter disappointments, its crushed hopes, as the romance of their lives was turned into mocking tragedy. For a brief moment they were left alone to exchange the final words, but what words were spoken, and whether of consolation or despair, none knew. The ordeal was soon over, however; all preliminaries for the execution had been arranged; and Richard awaited the dawn of execution day with that poise already described at the beginning of this narrative.

IV.

In the Shadows

THERE was something diabolical in the atmosphere of the death chamber, whose bare floor and barren walls accentuated the prominence of the death instrument. Only two plain benches, on which sat twenty witnesses, prevented the sense of utter emptiness from which humanity intuitively shrinks. Nature abhors the vacuum; likewise does human nature. That impulse which urges one with quickened step past vacant houses —that makes one turn aside from unfrequented thoroughfares and causes him to shiver as the sounds of his own footsteps break the stillness of the night—is but the protest of the soul against vacuity. The solemn stillness depressed the witnesses. Before them was the mute successor to the guillotine and hangman's noose. Here, indeed, was a fit throne for the Grim Visitor; here was the end of life—the beginning of eternity!

Their suspense was of short duration, for the machinery of the law was soon in motion. In a few seconds, Richard was fastened to the chair with a strap that passed around his body, under his arms and over his chest; the helmet was securely placed on his head; and the electrician jerked down the switch with a crash that resounded throughout the room like a sharp explosion. Instantly, his body surged forward against the strap with tremendous force—but it held. There was a convulsive movement of his well developed muscles as he writhed momentarily like some giant serpent in the throes of death. For a full minute the current due to 1850 volts coursed through his members, as the prison physician observed its effects; then it was turned off, while the medical staff, applying the stethoscope, worked busily to ascertain whether any trace of life remained. There was none.

However, before the official announcement of death could be made, Doctor Grant stepped from the group of witnesses and said calmly: "In order that there may be no question at any future time about the physical fact of Richard Ames' death, I demand that his body again be subjected to the electrical current, so that the fact of his death will never be open to dispute."

The suggestion of possible controversy over his death, when the corpse would be delivered to Doctor Grant himself, seemed preposterous, but in

order to gratify his wishes they yielded, and again the current sped through the body; again the stethoscope was applied but revealed no signs of life. Then came the official announcement by the prison physician according to legal *formula*—"I pronounce this man dead."

The penalty of the law had been paid.

V.

After Death—What?

IT required twenty minutes after the execution to complete the official records, when the body was removed to the ambulance held in readiness for its reception. Those who assisted in its removal observed that the ambulance was electrically heated, presumably to preserve the bodily temperature. Up to this time the proposed scientific experiment had been regarded as a ruse to enable Richard's wife to prevent his interment in the prison cemetery but the elaborate equipment of the ambulance, effected at great cost, convinced the most skeptical that experimental work was contemplated. Knowledge of this fact, however, did not lessen public comment. On the contrary, sharp criticism of the Doctor's ethical standards followed. That he could treat the body of his most intimate friend as a mere inanimate object appeared uncanny; but he was indifferent to public criticism; he was interested in results only, and pursued the plans, formulated by himself and Richard, with as much determination as had characterized his efforts in behalf of leniency.

An hour passed before the body reached its destination on the third floor of the Doctor's country home, which had been converted into a laboratory. The driver of the ambulance, who assisted in its removal, was the only person besides the Doctor who entered the room. When he withdrew, Doctor Grant stepped to the door, turned the key, and went into a seclusion from which he did not emerge until ten days later. During that period, he never left the room and allowed no one to enter. His meals were brought to the door by servants who immediately retired. Not even his own trusted guard was admitted within the chamber of mystery, and at his command the telephone had been disconnected, thus severing all communication with the outside world.

The eyes of the world were literally focused on Doctor Grant's country home. There was no mistaking the importance of his labors, for his ability and thoroughness were so well known that even the medical profession was in a receptive mood for an announcement of the miraculous—some new discovery, perchance, that might prove revolutionary in medical science.

Consequently, there was a distinct feeling of disappointment when he abandoned his seclusion and reopened his home without disclosing the results of his experiment. People came in droves, impelled by the irresistible force of curiosity. He showed them through his country mansion, taking particular care that they should have ample time to examine the laboratory. If he felt any grief over Richard's death, his countenance did not reveal it. He talked pleasantly of his "ranch," as he called it; in fact, he talked of everything except that in which they were intensely interested. But examination of the laboratory did not allay public curiosity, for there was no trace of Richard's body—no skeleton or other remains to indicate recent experimentation. Had the proposed scientific experiment, after all, been a mere subterfuge to escape the stigma of prison burial? Such might have been their conclusion, had the Doctor not disposed of that theory in response to a direct question concerning Richard's body, to which he replied: "I used it in scientific experiment and it has entirely disappeared."

VI.

In Probate

RICHARD named Doctor Grant as executor of his will, and in due time probate proceedings were instituted. The birth of Richard Ames, Jr., made the appointment of a guardian necessary to manage his share of the estate—an appointment that was given to Richard's widow. The terms of the will were so explicit that no controversy arose between the heirs with respect to their proportionate interests, but friction developed between the Doctor and Gordon, Richard's brother, for the Doctor, although usually prompt in business matters, performed the duties of executor with reluctance. Some mysterious influence seemed to be pulling him back, as if he desired to delay the entire proceedings. The record was full of continuances at his request, until finally Gordon complained to the Court, who threatened to remove the Doctor unless he should abandon his dilatory tactics.

In truth, Doctor Grant displayed more interest in solving the crime imputed to Richard than he did in the administration of his estate, while Gordon offered little, if any, co-operation in the effort to clear Richard's name, but insistently urged the utmost dispatch in the estate's distribution. Such haste and lack of co-operation impressed the Doctor unfavorably, causing him even to suspect that Gordon might have committed the crime under circumstances deliberately planned to throw suspicion upon Richard, so that he might share in his estate. However, his demand was not open to criticism from a legal standpoint. As a beneficiary of the will he was entitled to one-third of a million dollars within the period fixed by law, and the Doctor was compelled to comply, for more than a year had passed and the time for filing claims against the estate had expired. In fact, there were no claims, not even for funeral expenses, as Richard had not been buried.

The entire estate, therefore, was ready for division among the heirs, and a motion for its final distribution had been filed by Gordon's attorneys. For some hidden motive the Doctor seemed determined to hold the estate together. As he was acting without compensation, he could not be accused of mercenary motives; but it was obvious that a spirit of mutual hostility existed between him and Gordon. Hitherto, it had been covered with the veneer of courtesy, but at last it had come to the surface. There was nothing for the Doctor to do, but to fight, even though it might interfere with his plans for the arrest and conviction of the real

culprit; but the burden rested on him to show some legal reason why the estate should not be distributed. He accepted this burden and asked for further delay to procure the attendance of an absent witness whose presence, he affirmed, would disclose such a startling array of facts that the Court would be compelled to deny the right of distribution. The Judge was plainly irritated, declaring that no conceivable state of facts would sustain such an absurd contention, but out of respect for the Doctor's sincerity fixed the hearing on the motion for ten days later. Little did he anticipate, however, the vexatious situation that was destined to confront him, for there transpired in the *interim* an event without parallel in history—one that taxed the credulity of mankind as a physiological fact and initiated a series of legal complications unknown in the annals of the law—an event so at variance with human experience as to transcend mortal comprehension.

VII.

The Missing Witness

RICHARD AMES alighted from an early morning train at the Pennsylvania station just a week subsequent to the foregoing incident and was affectionately greeted by Doctor Grant, who was waiting to receive him. For more than a year they had faithfully guarded the secret of Richard's existence, hoping that the truth might be revealed and thus enable him to return to society as a vindicated man; but they had met with disappointment, as no light had been shed on the mystery of the crime. The critical juncture reached in the administration of the estate, however, caused Doctor Grant to request Richard's return, to prevent its distribution. As the Doctor was not an attorney, he should not be criticised if his suggestion proved ineffective, for the peculiar status of Richard as a member of society was one that required judicial determination, for which there was no precedent. He had returned, however, not merely to preserve his estate—but to establish his right to live!

No words were spoken when they met. The vivid impressions of the past had produced an emotional complex which, under the excitement of the moment, automatically recalled, with all of its horrible details, the scene of the death chamber, causing it to pass through their minds like a panorama with the rapidity of a dream. Words were not necessary to express the feelings of two souls whose tentacles reached out and touched each other, and the silence was broken only when Richard asked tremulously—

"Does Ruth know?"

"Not yet," replied Robert.

"Is there any clue?" Richard inquired anxiously.

"No; only a suspicion," was Robert's reply.

"Suspicion of whom?" Richard asked eagerly, exultant over the faintest hope of vindication.

"That is a question which I shall not answer," replied Robert instantly, "for suspicion is like a flame; it spreads rapidly and leaves ruin in its path. The reputations of many good men have become as ashes before its unquenchable fires, fanned by the winds of gossip and scandal. You were sacrificed upon the altar of circumstance, lighted by its unholy flame. Although a guide to investigation, suspicion should never be passed from man to man—not even between friends—until it is supported by credible facts. To cause one to suspect friends is to destroy the most sacred relationship among men, for suspicion and friendship cannot dwell in the heart at the same time. Hence, until tangible proof is available, this secret thought must be mine alone."

"The same old Robert," said Richard, feigning a laugh, "and the same old idealism."

Arm in arm they started for the exit, discussing their plans for the day. It was to be a day of great events—a day of reunion and preparation. The news must first be broken to Ruth, lest the shock of sudden meeting be too great for her strength—a task to be performed by Doctor Grant who had permitted her to remain in ignorance of Richard's existence because he believed absolute secrecy essential to the latter's vindication. Next in order was the employment of attorneys, for both realized that legal perils surrounded Richard, knowing that the announcement of his return would bring an immediate conflict with the legal authorities, in which the courts would be called upon to determine the legal effect of the Certificate of Execution and the *Post Mortem* Certificate of the prison physician, both of which had been filed for public record, as required by the Penal Code.

The necessity of immediate legal representation, however, had not been anticipated, because Richard's execution had been described in the press with such detail that no one entertained the least doubt of his death. Besides, it was still dark and the city was sleeping, so that there was slight probability of encountering anyone who might recognize him. Feeling secure against police intervention, they planned first the reunion, and their plans might have been realized, had they not unexpectedly met officer Daniel McSweeney of the Detective Force, who, as it happened, had been detailed to service in the court room during Richard's trial. His vigilant eye fell on the pair as they passed. It was but a momentary, accidental glance, but sufficient to enable him to formulate a theory. Others might have hesitated because of the official record of Richard's death, but, like electric flashes, his brain immediately recorded the following conclusions:

"That is Richard Ames; therefore, Richard Ames was not executed, but is a fugitive from justice."

With that faculty of forming quick judgments which had made him invaluable to the Police Department, he turned quickly, laid his hand on Richard's shoulder and said: "Richard Ames, you are under arrest; come with me." The latter admitted his identity and accompanied the officer to the central police station without protest. He was again in the clutches of the law, and the thought seemed to stabilize him. Just a moment before, he had been hesitant as the pathos of his prospective meeting with Ruth loomed before him, for, in the presence of woman's love, hallowed by her tears, every true man is humble; but he was dealing with men again and the composure that characterized his demeanor during past ordeals had returned.

He chatted pleasantly with the arresting officer,

inquired about mutual friends, told of his experiences in the mining regions of Arizona, but threw no light on the mystery of his reappearance in life. He spoke without resentment for the officer, whose genius and fidelity he admired, because he understood that his arrest was a necessary step in judicial proceedings to establish either his right to live, or again to determine his status as a convicted criminal. With this viewpoint he entered the station unperturbed, where, after the usual "informalities" he was formally booked as a "fugitive from justice."

There was commotion in newspaper circles when the report of his return and arrest was received. The mad rush for the "first extra" was on, as reporters hurried to the jail to ascertain, if possible, any facts which might explain the reappearance in life of one whose death many of them had witnessed. As their eyes fell on the prisoner, their countenances revealed the transition that was taking place within them—a transition from curiosity to utter consternation. Before them stood Richard in the flesh. His identification was complete, but they had been equally certain of his death—a certainty that was shared by the prison physician and other signers of the death certificate, who were aroused from their slumbers by excited interviewers seeking to elicit some statement of facts in support of the theory that a deception had been practiced on the prison officials through a substitution of victims, by means of which Richard had evaded the death penalty; but all were positive that Richard occupied the electric chair and that the current produced his death.

In this connection the request of Doctor Grant for a second application of the electric current was recalled, and for the first time its significance became evident. What had been considered an irrational demand, made under the stress of great emotion, was in reality a calm, deliberate act, planned to direct attention to the identity of the victim and the certainty of his death, so that the evidence of the witnesses should have greater probative value when the issue of life or death should again await decision by the Court. In the shadow of the electric chair, the Doctor had foreseen this identical crisis in which the veil of mystery was to be lifted from the physiological facts upon which Richard's hope for freedom depended; but he did not foresee the unprecedented legal problems involved, whose ramifications were to extend into unexplored legal fields, affecting the adequacy of our most cherished constitutional guaranties of personal and property rights, and demonstrating the necessity of co-ordination between the Laws of Science and the Science of the Law.

VIII.

Twice In Jeopardy

THE absence of any satisfactory explanation of the facts from a scientific standpoint focused attention upon the courts as the stage of the most interesting drama in legal history; nor was the public held long in waiting, for Doctor Grant proceeded immediately to his attorney, to whom he disclosed, for the first time, the true facts. Before noon a petition for a writ of *habeas corpus* was filed in his behalf. This writ of ancient origin, extorted from reluctant sovereigns as a protection against illegal imprisonment, was directed to the proper officials, commanding them to have the prisoner before the Court at 10 A. M. the following day, to show legal cause for his imprisonment.

The novel feature of the petition, however, was the ground upon which relief was sought. Briefly, it set forth the previous conviction of the prisoner and alleged that "pursuant to the sentence of the Court the petitioner was duly executed for the crime named in the indictment, in the manner prescribed by the Penal Code, to wit: 'By causing to pass through his body a current of electricity of sufficient intensity to cause death.'" Upon this incredible statement of the facts, the petitioner alleged that his imprisonment violated the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which provides that "no person shall be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life and limb," and prayed relief on the ground that he had previously suffered the full penalty of the law.

Although often resorted to, in order to prevent double punishment, never in the history of jurisprudence had this provision been invoked to prevent the infliction of the death penalty a second time. The petition, therefore, aroused interest not only because it was expected to reveal the physical facts which had been the subject of so much conjecture, but also on account of its probable legal consequences, for, if science had solved the enigma of life in the case at bar by making revivification an actuality, the law itself would have to be revolutionized to meet the problems of administration caused by the advent of this new element into society—the man from the tomb. Assuming the petition to be true, would the revivification of a dead person operate as a revival of his previous personal and property rights?

The question was considered important because of the great number of violent deaths. If the finality of Richard's death had been set aside by medical science, it was logical to infer that the process of its accomplishment would be applicable to many cases—extending possibly to deaths from disease. Hence, the case was not viewed as an isolated occurrence, but as a potential precedent for future judicial decisions and a proper subject for legislative action, involving the devolution of title under laws of inheritance and by will, the possible dissolution of marital relationships, the maturity and collection of life insurance, and the termination of partnerships and other business relations which heretofore had resulted from death by operation of law. His status, therefore, was immersed in legal complexities whose depths the ablest of attorneys could not fathom, and this uncertainty contributed to public interest in the various court actions that followed.

At the appointed hour the officers brought Richard into Court and made their return to the writ, setting forth his previous indictment and conviction and alleging that the sentence of the Court had not been executed in the manner required by statute. Having produced the living prisoner as proof of this allegation, they applied for a new war-

rant, directing the warden again to fix the time for execution and proceed therewith according to the original sentence. With the record of his conviction and sentence, the State had made out a *prima facie* case, and announced that it had no further evidence to offer. Whereupon, the burden of proof passed to Richard and his counsel.

The first evidence in his behalf was the official record of his execution, consisting of the death certificate, signed by the warden, prison physician and twenty witnesses, each of whom testified that no signs of life were apparent when the announcement of Richard's death was made. Their testimony was supported by the prison physician who explained the nature of the *post mortem* examination, the use of the stethoscope to ascertain the presence of life, and expressed the opinion that the potential of 1850 volts produced death, which he defined as "the complete cessation of all vital functions." On cross-examination, however, he could give no explanation of Richard's subsequent existence, other than a mere guess that "it might be due to some process of resuscitation hitherto unknown to medical science."

Upon this condition of the record, the Judge indicated that his decision would be adverse to the prisoner, under the well established rule of law that courts and juries must reject all evidence contrary to the known laws of Nature, even if given by a multitude of witnesses. "Consequently," said the Court, "unless the declarations of these witnesses are supported by scientific proof, the presence of the prisoner must be held as conclusive proof that he was never executed as required by law." Accepting the Court's ruling without protest, Doctor Grant was sworn as a witness to testify concerning the nature of his experiment. It was a crucial moment—one that had been awaited with great interest by an excited and curious public, and knowledge that the life of his friend hung on his every word impressed the occasion with a gravity that affected not only the throng of court attendants, but also his Honor upon the bench.

IX.

The Miracle?

STEP by step, Doctor Grant explained the nature of the different chemicals and devices used in his most notable experiment, affirming that the result was in no sense miraculous, but merely the manifestation of natural laws whose existence had theretofore only been suspected. Accepting the results obtained by other scientists from the use of *adrenalin* and electricity as life restoratives, Doctor Grant combined with them, in a single experiment, such additional knowledge as he had gained by personal experimentation upon living organisms.

He explained that *adrenalin*, although regarded by many as a supernatural substance, is merely the secretion of the supra-renal glands of men and animals, which, thrown into the blood, is quickly transformed into powerful muscular movements. "Its latest and most sensational use," he said, "is its injection directly into the heart muscle, which in a number of cases has stimulated the heart into action in bodies entirely devoid of life," and he read from current medical journals an account of its use in restoring heart action to babies born dead.

Other scientists had proved the efficacy of certain electric currents as an aid to resuscitation, and by actual test on the bodies of animals he demonstrated that electricity may be utilized to bring the victim of electric shock back to life, provided that a current of different character is used, for the current that aids resuscitation is an alternating current with high voltage, which does not produce heart vibrations. This fact, known to all physicians, accounts for its wide use in the resuscitation of electric shock victims. In no previous case, however, had heart action been restored, either by *adrenalin* or electricity, when the patient had been dead more than five minutes, due to coagulation and chemical changes within the blood produced by death, which had rendered impossible the restoration of circulation.

Doctor Grant realized, therefore, that in order to utilize their therapeutic powers he must first restore the chemical purity of the blood and produce its circulation by artificial agencies, and attributed his success to a proper understanding of the phenomenon of life.

"Life," said Doctor Grant, "is primarily a matter of blood circulation. Contrary to the popular view, the brain is not the seat of life, although brain injuries usually cause death, on account of the paralysis of the nerves controlling heart pulsations. The vital principle is in the blood and the heart is important only as a pump to keep it in circulation. Therefore," said Doctor Grant, "if the secret of life is blood circulation, life itself should return and cause the bodily organs to resume their functions after death, if some mechanical process were invented to reproduce circulation."

Upon the premise that artificial circulation was scientifically possible, he formulated his plans. It was in this field that he demonstrated his genius for discovery, using the animal specimens obtained by trapping as well as some of his prize live-stock in making his tests, and he laughingly remarked that "Spot"—one of his favorite calves—had "already enjoyed more lives than the proverbial cat." The net result of his labors was the strange compound called "vitasal," meaning "the salt of life," but he refused to state its constituent elements because of his proprietary interest in the *formula* which he might lose if compelled to disclose the process of its manufacture. However, he volunteered that it was compounded on a saline base whose primary chemical action on the blood is the dissolution of all coagulations and the reduction of the fluid to a state of uniform density.

The qualities of *vitasal* were not more interesting than the ingenious device by which it was administered. This instrument, known as the *cardiamotor*, which the Doctor termed a "mechanical heart," was a small pump, electrically driven, the ends of which were inserted in the large blood vessels. In actual operation it literally pumped the blood from one blood vessel into a spiral tube containing *vitasal*, where it absorbed the qualities essential to its purification, returning thence through the other end of the tube into the circu-

latory system. It was a sort of laundry for the blood, without whose aid the properties of *adrenalin* and *vitasal* would have proved fruitless. Such was the function of the *cardia-motor*—a discovery of great potentialities, bringing within the reach of the physician the coveted power of restoring life long after death has occurred, thus demonstrating that revivification is no longer a dream, but a scientific possibility, pregnant with tremendous economic and moral consequences—should the secret of *vitasal* be given to the world.

Having explained the drugs and devices, Doctor Grant described their application to Richard's body. Opening the chest cavity, he placed one end of the pump in the large vein which carries all blood to the heart, inserting the other end in the large artery leading from the heart. Thus the heart was severed from all connection with the circulation and the fluid passed through the *cardia-motor,* which was so timed that each stroke corresponded to the normal heartbeat. Within thirty minutes the bodily temperature was nearing normal. At the end of an hour, a distinct flush was on Richard's cheek, and shortly thereafter a slight twitching of the facial muscles was detected. It was an involuntary movement, but Doctor Grant knew that the seat of such action was in certain convolutions of the brain and realized that a great stride had been made toward returning consciousness.

For two hours the blood coursed through the "mechanical heart," absorbing the life-giving powers of *vitasal,* when a sample of blood extracted was found to be chemically pure. A series of alternating currents produced by high voltages was then applied to the most important nerve centers, developing distinct muscular convulsions in different bodily members, thus convincing Doctor Grant that the crucial moment had arrived. Thereupon, putting his hand inside the chest cavity, he gave the lungs a vigorous massage, alternately forcing the air in and out, as in the act of breathing. Suddenly there was a faint gasp; respiration had set in. The phenomenon of life had returned as the result of artificial circulation, produced by the *cardia-motor,* but its continuance depended upon stimulating the heart into action. Like the sword of Damocles, life hung by a slender thread.

Speed became imperative. With great rapidity the pump was removed and the incisions in the blood vessels were closed. In an instant, he injected *adrenalin* directly into the heart and, catching it in his hand, compressed it, forcing it to contract and expand. This occupied but a few seconds when he felt the natural heart-throb as he held it in his grasp. The heart had responded to the powerful stimulus of *adrenalin* and in regular cadence took up its work, where it left off at the electric chair.

When Doctor Grant finished, a silence more eloquent than words filled the room—a mute tribute to his genius and skill. It was one of those occasions when people are awed by the majesty of a great deed, but the silence was broken at last by the Judge, who inquired: "Has the State any rebuttal?"

"None, your Honor," replied the attorney for the State, "for the reason that the story of the witness must be discarded because at variance with all known physical facts. Furthermore, the word 'death,' as used in the statute, contemplates a permanent state of dissolution, so that resuscitation of the victim would not exempt him from the provisions of a judgment that is final. The sentence of death is perpetual; it hangs over the prisoner now, and his very life is a violation of the law."

As counsel for the State resumed his seat, a momentary murmur passed through the crowd as the spectators leaned forward, intent upon catching every word of a decision of momentous importance. Their livid faces portrayed their vivid interest in the two souls most directly concerned, for Ruth was again at Richard's side, suffering immeasurable anguish as again she awaited the words that meant life and hope—or death and despair. For the first time in the two trials, Richard trembled as Ruth's muffled sobs filled the room. The face of the Judge—as ominous of evil as portentous of good—remained inscrutable. There was an eternity in that moment of uncertainty as he turned to the reporter and began the dictation of the decision.

"The petition in this case," said the Court, "seeks the discharge of the prisoner on the unprecedented allegation that he has heretofore suffered the death penalty for the identical crime, on account of which he is now imprisoned, which he alleges to be in violation of the constitutional guaranty that no person shall twice be put in jeopardy of life and limb for the same offense—a provision which our courts have jealously enforced against the barbarity of double punishment. The issue of law is simple, but the issue of fact is more complex, the burden of proof resting squarely upon the prisoner.

"Although great weight attaches to precedent under our judicial system, we are not living under the laws of the Medes and Persians, which know no change. Our laws must be administered in the light of present day knowledge—not the knowledge of yesterday. Hence, revivification, which yesterday seemed incredible, must be viewed in the light of scientific achievement as explained by a scientist of unchallenged integrity and accuracy. The rule, barring testimony at variance with known physical facts, no longer obtains in this case, because the experiments described purport to be based on Nature's laws. The issue, therefore, is merely whether 'death' was produced, as that term is understood in medical science.

"The contention that the sentence of death is perpetual and that a victim of the death penalty, if restored to life, would again be subject to its provisions, does not seem well grounded in law. The authority of the Court to impose the death penalty a second time does not appear in the statute; nor does it provide that the convict shall remain dead. To write such meaning into the law by judicial construction would be legislation, invading the province of the law-making body. Hence, 'death,' as used in the statute, must be construed in its scientific sense as defined by the medical profession, to-wit, 'the complete cessation of all vital functions.' At such instant the full penalty of the law is paid, and it follows that the infliction of the death penalty a second time, being double punishment, would violate the Federal Constitu-

tion. It is, therefore, ordered that the prisoner be discharged from the custody of the officers named in the writ."

We shall not attempt to describe the feelings of Richard and Ruth when he was declared a free man; nor shall we unveil those tender domestic scenes as he rejoined his family circle. Friends and relatives welcomed him back to his former social position, but his legal status was a different matter, for the effect of the Court's decision had not been considered, even by the Judge who rendered it, except as a bar to further punishment. His return to life, however, produced such unusual complications affecting his property and personal rights, that they must be given precedence over sentimental incidents in the remainder of this narrative.

X.

Legal Tangles With New Angles

THE day following Richard's liberation had been set for hearing the motion to distribute his estate and at the appointed hour he appeared in Court with Doctor Grant, who filed a motion to dismiss the probate proceedings, assuming that Richard's presence established his right to resume possession of the property; but, to their great surprise, Gordon's attorneys, appearing in behalf of his creditors, opposed the dismissal, for he had encumbered his portion of the estate for several thousand dollars, which he had already expended, and the dismissal would have deprived his creditors of their security. Hence, Gordon was compelled to resist the motion and for the first time Richard's relation to the property accumulated by him during his previous life became the subject of judicial determination. As this decision is the first to define the status of a revivified person, we set it forth, not only because of its novelty, but as a precedent for future judicial guidance. The Court said:

"In this case the Court is confronted by a legal situation for which no provision has been made, except in the general laws of inheritance, under which the title to all property of the deceased vests in his heirs or devisees at the moment of his death. The death of Richard Ames has already been judicially determined by another court of competent jurisdiction, and to that decision he owes his present freedom. The judgment that his death transpired during the infliction of the death penalty becomes conclusive on this Court, under the doctrine of *res adjudicata;* but, even if not conclusive, the prisoner would be stopped from setting up a different state of facts in support of his motion.

"Accepting his death as proved, it follows that the title to his property vested in the three heirs named in his will, at the moment of his death, and their investiture of title does not depend upon death's duration. Hence, Richard Ames has no proprietary interest in the property accumulated by him. Death deprived him of his possessions and made him a pauper, and his revivification does not operate as a restoration of his former property rights, because the rights of his heirs have vested and cannot be taken from them without their consent. The status of a revivified person may be summarized as follows:

"All natural relationships, including ties of consanguinity and the natural rights of the individual as a member of society, are unaffected by death; but all voluntary associations of a social, domestic or business nature, are dissolved by death *ipso facto.* Richard Ames is still Gordon's brother and the father of Richard Ames, Jr., and in case of their prior death may re-inherit from them all or part of what they received under his will. Death does not alter those rights which are founded on nature.

"With respect to the widow's share, the situation is different. Although a husband is an heir to his wife's estate, Richard Ames would not re-inherit any part of the property received by her under his will—because he is not her husband. Marriage is always dissolved by death, and, unless they should re-marry or she should name him as a beneficiary of her will, he would not succeed to any part of her property. Furthermore, the administration of this estate must proceed because title to valuable real estate is involved, which would be clouded if these proceedings were dismissed, for, although the widow and brother might re-convey their respective interests, the infant's share cannot be relinquished during his minority. The motion to dismiss is, therefore, denied and the order for final distribution will be entered."

When the Court concluded, Richard was bewildered as he contemplated his peculiar position as a member of society. A reputed millionaire, he found himself penniless in the midst of the wealth he had accumulated. The position of owner and heir had been reversed; his heirs were now the owners and he was merely an heir to part of the property. But more startling than his pauperism was the suggestion that he was not Ruth's husband. As he recalled the marriage vow—"until death do you part"—he realized that legally he was a mere intruder in his own home, or rather, that he had no home and no lawful standing as husband of the mother of his own son. Although lawfully wedded and never divorced, their relationship would be illicit. Such was the ruling of the Court—a position that was sustained by Richard's attorney in private consultation. Hence, a new marriage license was obtained and again the ceremony was performed that made them husband and wife.

Never before had such strange incidents occurred, but their probable recurrence was discussed by the press and bar in connection with the process of revivification, by means of which it was considered possible that covetous heirs in the future might cause the temporary death and revivification of rich relatives to obtain immediate possession of their inheritances, or to mature their life insurance policies. Its use by unscrupulous marital partners as a substitute for divorce was also discussed as a possible result of Richard's experience, especially in a State which recognizes but one ground for dissolving the marital bonds.

It required but a few days for Richard to arrange his affairs preparatory to resuming his professional career, since the active management of his former estate had passed out of his control.

He had no regrets, however, because it made provision for his loved ones as he desired. Hence, Richard refused Gordon's offer to re-convey his portion of the estate, because Ruth's share was ample for their needs and he felt that the use of such capital would establish his brother in the business world on a basis that would insure his future success. The unselfishness of the offer, however, caused Doctor Grant to revise his estimate of Gordon's character, as he realized that his apparent haste for possession had been due to the pressure of creditors. As a consequence, the discord between them disappeared, and the Doctor rebuked himself for having entertained a suspicion that Gordon might have had some sinister connection with Richard's plight. But, even if he had not discarded such suspicion voluntarily, he would have been forced to do so a few days later when the true facts were made known and Richard obtained vindication as sensationally as he had previously become involved in the web of suspicion.

XI.

The Confession

THE author of Richard's vindication admitted slaying Cal Morton, popular clubman of New York City, but under circumstances constituting justifiable homicide. His belated confession was due, he said, to his absence in the remote forests of Brazil, where he had extensive lumber interests; also to the fact that under the excitement of the moment he had indiscreetly attempted to conceal the body of his victim, which, he realized upon reflection, would raise an inference of his own criminal guilt. By the merest accident he had learned of Richard's critical situation through some old editions of the New York papers, containing an account of his arrest with an array of circumstances pointing to his guilt. The age of the papers caused him to doubt his ability to reach New York in time to save the prisoner, but he resolved the doubt in Richard's favor and booked for passage on the first ship leaving Rio de Janeiro. Such was the business that brought Warren Vance back to the States. Although he arrived too late to avert the calamity to Richard, he faced the situation with courage, resolved to clear the latter's name, even at the risk of his own liberty.

Cal Morton and Warren Vance were members of the same club and had many mutual friends—among whom was Richard. The former was noted for his social qualities which had earned for him the title of "Congenial Cal." Being of a purposeless but harmless type, he was known as "a good fellow," which designation, like Charity, "covers a multitude of sins." He made many friends and needed them, for he was constantly getting into what people call "scrapes." His income from a family trust fund would have been ample—had it not been for his vices. He was fond of "adventure," as he termed it, but adventure to him always meant moral hazard. He "fell before the bright lights," at the feet of "painted beauties," and felt "the urge of the game." Consequently, on numerous occasions he called upon friends, including both Warren and Richard, for a little favor to tide him over an emergency, and because he was not particularly bad they usually came to his rescue.

Hence, when "Congenial Cal" hailed Richard's car on the evening of the tragedy there was nothing unusual in the incident, nor in the fact that they drove away together. Cal was in trouble, being entangled in a blackmailer's net, and unless he raised a dignified sum, an unsavory chapter of his life's history would be disclosed to his permanent social detriment. On account of the gravity of the situation and the large sum desired, Richard returned to his home with his guest, where they discussed the matter of security, but, being unable to reach an agreement, Cal took his leave and departed to interview other prospects. According to Richard's testimony, that was the last time he saw Cal Morton alive. However, when Morton's body was found buried under a clump of shrubbery near the highway, Richard's inability to produce any witness who had seen the deceased since they were together in his car directed suspicion toward him; and later, when his blood-stained jacket and gloves were unearthed near the body and a chemical analysis of the mat in his car disclosed human blood stains, the chain of circumstantial evidence was so complete that the jury were satisfied as to his guilt, notwithstanding his denial of any knowledge of the crime.

The return of Warren Vance solved the mystery. According to his story, Morton came directly to his home, next door from Richard's. He had exhausted all resources in his effort to raise money and came to Vance as a last resort. At first he was suppliant, but, being refused, became imperative and demanded money under threats of violence. With an apparently insane rage he approached Vance, reaching his right hand toward his hip pocket, as if to draw a gun. Whether he attempted coercion as a rational act, or had lost his reason, will never be known, for Vance, believing he was about to be killed, seized a club and swung it violently against Morton's head, who fell unconscious to the floor. Under the impulse of fear he had been unable to measure the force of the stroke, but quickly discovered it was fatal. However, upon examining his victim, he found that the latter was unarmed, which caused him to fear that his story of self-defense might not be believed, should he report the incident to the authorities. As he had already procured passage to Brazil for the following day, his detention would have meant great loss in the development of his timber concession. He therefore decided to conceal the body and, acting upon this rash impulse, rushed to the adjacent premises where Richard's car was stored, put on the latter's jacket and gloves and carried Morton's bleeding body forth. Placing it on the floor of the car, he hurriedly drove to the spot where it was subsequently disinterred, and, when he had finished, threw the jacket and gloves into a depression, covering them with dirt and leaves, thinking he had effaced every trace of the deed, and not suspecting that he had involved his friend in a maze of incriminating circumstances leading directly to the electric chair.

Such, in brief, was the story of Warren Vance—a story as dramatic in its aspects as had been the conviction of Richard. Nothing but a heroic sense of honor could have prompted its narration under conditions imperiling the liberty of its author. This fact gave it a verity which none challenged.

It came too late, it is true, to prevent the execution with its attendant horrors, but it was vindication—and that was what Richard wanted. Yet the case was not without its compensations, for it had contributed to the world's greatest achievement in a scientific sense, and within its scope the whole gamut of human emotions was embraced. There was compensation for Richard also, not only in the esteem of former friends, but in new friendships created by his tragic sacrifice.

XII.

Vitasal

AS Richard returned to his daily routine, Doctor Grant resumed the active management of his great city laboratory. Naturally, the public had awaited his return with a feeling of expectancy, either that the formula of *vitasal* would be disclosed or that some arrangement for its manufacture would be made for the use of the medical profession. Weeks stretched into months, however, with no disclosure of his plans until public impatience, inspired perhaps by a desire for earthly immortality, grew to such a degree that a voluntary delegation of business and professional men, headed by the Judge who presided at the *habeas corpus* proceedings, waited upon Doctor Grant, imploring him to reveal the secret of his discovery. But their petition was denied by the Doctor, who said:

"To do so would be a greater calamity than death itself. The revivfication of Richard Ames may be hailed as a triumph of science, but its repetition would be a social experiment, potential of economic and moral disaster. Death is God's remedy against monopoly. Once in every generation, at least, all property must change hands. This is Nature's provision against the perpetuation of vast estates and the creation of conditions that would result in a social slavery. The wealth of a John D. Rockefeller or a Henry Ford, for example, may be an inspiration to the genius, thrift and industry of this and succeeding generations, and thus prove of public benefit, because the brevity of life constitutes a natural limitation upon its abuse; but self-perpetuation by artificial process would convert their vast economic power into a social menace that would eventually disrupt society.

"But the moral aspects of revivification are the most serious," he added, "because death has ever been the greatest deterrent to evil and the greatest incentive to good. The brevity of human life, which is but another expression of the certainty of death, underlies all philanthropy—all emotions of sympathy, love and mercy. We forgive and court forgiveness because death is certain and we do not wish to face eternity with conscious knowledge that we have wronged a fellow creature, unless we have made redress for the wrong.

"Remove death, and hatreds would become perpetual—the selfish and ignoble characteristics of brutal origin would attain the ascendancy. An era of violence unprecedented in the history of the world would follow if the process of revivification were placed in the hands of a race whose brutal impulses are restrained only by fear. The world is not ready for such a discovery, for it would plunge society into a refined materialism more brutal than the customs of savagery. Death is of divine decree; therefore, it is not meet that mortal man should lay hold upon the Tree of Life that he might live forever.

"Once is enough!"

THE END.

THE NEW YORK TIMES.

May Test Heart Action of Criminal in Chair To Learn if Electricity Actually Kills

Special to The New York Times.

OSSINING, N. Y., Jan. 29.—Warden Lawes of Sing Sing Prison said today that plans were being considered for making a scientific study of the heart action of a man put to death in the electric chair.

If the plans are carried out, delicate apparatus will be attached to criminals as they are strapped into the chair. This will record the heart action before, during and after the current has passed through the body.

"No formal application has been made to me for permission to carry on this study," said Warden Lawes, "but I understand that the subject is being considered by specialists, including a representative of the Rockefeller Institute.

"Formerly it took three shocks of electricity to dispatch the man in the electric chair, and there was some skepticism then as to whether the shock actually caused death. There were some who believed that the death sentence was actually carried out on the autopsy table.

"An electrical engineer of the General Electric Company investigated the electric chair and made certain improvements. He enabled us to kill with two shocks and finally to kill with a single shock. He and certain medical men are now considering the possibility of studying the reaction of the condemned man to the current of electricity that is passed through the body."

The instrument to be used in the proposed test is an extremely delicate one which records on motion-picture film the electrical impulses that accompany heart action. It is so sensitive that it will take a record in one-thousandth part of a second.

STRIKE COST PILOT ... the amount of his pay ... Pension ... per cent of ...

The Man Who Was

Regarding the above story, the adjoining clipping from the New York Times of January 30th, 1927, is probably of more than passing interest, for the simple reason that it seems to be a good argument for the theme of the fiction story published here. It is of great interest to see that prominent scientists have thought it worthwhile to investigate the actual causes of death when a person is electrocuted. As the article states, many people believe that the electrical current only shocks the condemned man into unconsciousness, while the actual death sentence is carried out upon the operating table. The editor of this publication believes, and has always held this opinion, that a sufficiently strong shock certainly does kill, because many people who have come into contact with high tension wires have been killed instantly if their bodies, or part of their bodies, have been exposed to the full force of the electric current. In some cases, when only imperfect contact was made, it was possible to resuscitate the persons thus shocked.

—Editor.

The STAR of DEAD LOVE

-By Will H. Gray-

. . . He suddenly noticed that his laughter had frightened her, for besides showing signs of alarm, spurts of violet rays were coming from her metal-studded finger, and as she moved her hand, the flame, or rays, passed through one of the veranda posts . . . . the post was severed in the middle and showed a gap about four inches deep.

DOCTOR JOYCE sat on his veranda one evening smoking and thinking of nothing in particular when his attention was attracted to, what appeared to be, faint rays of blue light projected on the lawn. They were fairly distinct near the ground, but disappeared at a height of a few hundred feet. Being a scientist, his interest was aroused and he wondered what their origin could be. As he watched, a human form took shape at the place where the rays touched the lawn. The form was that of a young woman robed in white with fair hair fastened back, but apart from being semi-transparent, there was nothing very ghost-like about her.

The doctor—a most practical man—walked to the veranda steps and beckoned the form towards the house. She came at once and the doctor calmly pointed to the steamer chair beside his own. She went over to it, and he, watching intently, thought he saw a slight movement of the canvas as she sat down. He resumed his own seat and looked at her intently. He had much too good a grip of himself to think that he was dreaming or suffering from hallucinations. Presently an idea came to him. Relighting his pipe, he watched the smoke carefully until it was wafted towards her. Yes, there was the proof that he had sought; the smoke, when it reached her, diverged from its course and went round instead of through her. He smiled, and reached out his hand in an attempt to feel her hand; but he failed. He got up, went inside, and returned with a spool of fine thread, a couple of feet of which he unrolled and held stretched out in front of her. She understood his meaning and reaching out made a movement as though to break the thread, but it seemed to pass through her hand without effort. He was greatly pleased, however, because he noticed a slight sagging of the thread when she touched it, although not enough for him to feel the extra tension.

When he came to the conclusion that she was a real being, he began to study her carefully. She wore a loose, white gown, reaching to her ankles, and without sleeves. She wore no stockings, and her shoes, which were oval, seemed to be exactly similar and, therefore, interchangeable. They were made of an ivory-like substance. On the index finger of her right hand she wore what seemed to be a smooth thimble of the same substance, with a small, metal stud imbedded in the end. Her fair hair was held back by a broad ring of the same material. On her forehead there was a circle with a line like the hand of a clock pointing to what would be a quarter to the hour. She appeared to be about seventeen—barely grown up. But she was semi-transparent and it was hard to judge her age.

Well! thought the doctor, the next thing is to communicate. He soon satisfied himself that she could not hear, and she made no attempt to speak. He pointed to the clock-like sign on her forehead. She took a tablet of the same ivory-like material from an inner pocket, and with her thimbled finger drew a circle that shone as if drawn with luminous paint; she marked it off into quarters, and each quarter into eleven divisions. Then she drew four sketches in a row, all more or less alike: he could not make them out at first; somehow they reminded him of the inside of a walnut. She drew a circle under each, but with the hand varying in position. He looked at her for explanation. She tapped her head, and then put her finger on one of the sketches. Then he realized that the sketches depicted the human brain, and that they varied slightly from each other; the circles and pointers were evidently for the purpose of showing the brain development; thus his visitor, apparently, claimed her brain power to be equal to thirty-three parts out of forty-four maximum. He took a pencil and paper from his pocket, and drew a circle; then he tapped his head and held it toward her. She touched it at the place where the fourth or fifth point would be. The doctor burst out laughing.

Although he was not conceited, he did think his place on the circle should have been a little more advanced. He suddenly noticed that his laughter had frightened her, for besides showing signs of alarm, spurts of violet rays were coming from her metal-studded finger, and as she moved her hand, the flame, or rays, passed through one of the veranda posts. She noticed it at the same time that he did, and controlling herself, she shut off the rays, for the post was severed in the middle and showed a gap about four inches deep. "My dear girl," he remarked, "if you aren't careful with that thimble of yours, you will bring down the house."

He got up and examined the parts of the post. The wood was clean and smooth where it had been cut; there was no sign of burn or sawdust or anything to show where that four inches of wood had gone. He sat down again, and taking pencil and paper, drew a diagram of the solar system. She saw at once what he meant, and put her finger on Venus. He went into his library, and returned with a large volume on astronomy, which he opened at the pictures and diagrams and pointed them out to her. Then, referring to his pencil diagram again, he traced the earth's orbit around the sun, and then put a stroke. He did it again, and put down another stroke, and so on until he had ten strokes representing ten years; then he put a circle around the ten strokes. He looked at her, and it was evident that she understood him. He drew two other circles beside the first and then made five strokes, and pointing to himself and spacing his hands about a foot apart, indicated to her that thirty-five years ago he was about so big. He directed her attention to Venus in the book, and indicated that he wanted her to tell him her

THE chances are not one in a billion that an extra-terrestrial being will ever be able to communicate with us in the conventional manner. When the inhabitants of different worlds are brought into close contact, either the human mind will be far in advance of the extra-terrestrial mind, or, which is more likely, the inhabitant from the other world will "have it all over us." Just how another world traveler might make himself or herself understood is told most fascinatingly in this story by our new author. It is an altogether charming tale — — as it is unusual and interesting.

age. She pointed to his circles, each representing ten years, then to Venus in the picture to show him that she meant years of two hundred and twenty-five days. Then producing her tablet, she drew ten little circles and put a square around them. He smiled to himself, and remarked, "You don't look a hundred, even if your years are only seven months each." But as he spoke, she was busy making squares and did not stop until she had made twenty-five. Then she made three circles and finally six strokes. Again he was greatly tempted to laugh, but the sight of her thimble finger and the veranda post quelled the impulse. "Twenty-five hundred and thirty-six of your own years! Well, if you don't tell anyone, they'll never guess," he remarked. She was still busy with her finger on the tablet. This time she was drawing a small child; she put five strokes above it; then she drew a larger child, and put a circle to indicate ten years, then touched herself, and drew quite a presentable likeness, and over it put two circles and four strokes. "Now we have it," remarked the doctor, "twenty-four years of two hundred and twenty days each. If my mental calculations are right, you are almost fifteen." The doctor began to see a little light. In actual age she was fifteen, but it was one thousand five hundred and eighty-five years since she was born.

She rose, and walked into the library, beckoning him to follow; she pointed to various books which he took down and opened on the table. At last a small edition of an Encyclopaedia seemed to take her fancy, and making signs for him to carry the big collection of books, including the volume on astronomy, she led the way down the steps and out on the lawn where the rays of light were still shining. Laying down her writing tablet, which she had opened out as large as a newspaper, she indicated that the pile of books were to be laid upon it. He dutifully put them down, and watched her touch them. It did not surprise him to see the books grow until they were higher than the house, and at the same time become transparent. Again she touched them, and they melted into the blue rays and vanished. She picked up the ivory-like sheet, folded it, and put it into her pocket. Then she looked at him, inclined her head, looked up, touched her forehead with that all powerful thimble, and melted away into the rays just as the books had done.

DOCTOR JOYCE went back to his chair on the veranda. Every now and then he smiled to himself. "Some dream all right," he muttered. Then his glance fell on the veranda post, with the four inches missing out of the middle, and with face set in hard lines, he examined it carefully. Picking up the spool of thread, he broke off two or three yards, and putting a pin in the veranda post at the cut, he stretched the thread exactly parallel to the lower cut until he came to the chair where his visitor sat. Then he stretched another thread along the upper cut, and noticed with satisfaction that the threads came together exactly where she had her hand. Walking inside, he looked at the empty spaces on the bookshelves where his Encyclopaedia and his Astronomy had been. He went out on the lawn and gazed up at the star of love, the planet Venus, that shown brilliantly above.

His dreams were feverish that night, and when he awoke, he lay thinking for a few minutes, and then burst into his boyish laughter. "Jim," he called, "bring me the small Encyclopaedia and the big astronomy book from the library. And say, Jim, you also go out and see if the veranda post is cut in two." He laughed again at old Jim's look of astonishment. In a few minutes Jim was back. "Sah, the books you mention is not there. Yes, sah, the veranda post, as you say, is cut in two."

Night after night the doctor sat in his chair watching and thinking. He had prepared various ways of communicating, should his visitor appear at any moment. Suddenly he was smitten with the thought that perhaps she had come while he was out, and even now might be waiting for some sign from him. How stupid! No wonder she had put his brain power at four parts out of forty-four. Hurrying inside, he took a large sheet of white paper and drew with charcoal a big circle, in which he indicated a hand at a quarter to the hour. Underneath the circle he wrote COME. He took it out, spread it on the lawn, and returned to his chair. Fifteen minutes later the blue rays focused on the lawn, and he saw the girl materialize. She took out the folded sheet, opened it, and spread it on the lawn where the rays touched it. Then he seemed to see his books as big as street cars, and transparent so that he could see the houses across the road through them. When she touched the books he saw them shrink and become opaque and solid. In answer to her beckoning he went down and picked up the books. He hesitated just long enough to touch the sheet of white material. At first it felt smooth and cold like glass. Then he noticed that he was not really touching it at all, for his finger was about a quarter of an inch or so above it. "Negatively charged," he told himself, as he carried the books inside. When he returned she was sitting in the canvas deck chair. He switched on the light, but quickly turned it off again, for she seemed more dim in the strong light.

On a pad of paper he wrote: "Have you learned our language from the books?" She hesitated, and made no sign of understanding. He was surprised, and a little disappointed. Then he noticed that she was writing in her luminous characters with that fatal finger tip. It was his script that had floored her, for she wrote in perfect printing letters. "There is nothing in your books like your writing. Please give me a sample alphabet of small letters and capitals in your own writing." He wrote them out, and watched her study them for about twenty seconds. At the end of that time she knew them for always.

Now the way was open, and all of the mysteries of the planet of love were his for the asking.

Doctor Joyce wrote rapidly, tearing out sheet after sheet as he wrote them, and laying them on the arm of her chair. He leaned back while she answered his questions.

"You people on earth are on the verge of the discoveries we made ten thousand years ago.

"Life was altered when we found out that the attraction of the molecules of any substance could be changed. When we applied it to ourselves it

meant that we could cease to have the feelings and sufferings of the material, solid body. This dematerialized body—just as you see me now—is not subject to feeling or age, neither do we need nourishment. We used to suffer from disease, but we needed only to dematerialize, have the disease germs collected, materialized, and destroyed. Disease has long since disappeared from Venus. Every one can be material or dematerial just as she likes. Of course, in the natural state, when we are two inches high, we are delicate, little things, and lives are sometimes lost through accidents. With all our knowledge we cannot restore life, nor can we create it except from life.

"You earth people call Venus the star of love. There is no love on Venus now. There used to be at one time when there were two sexes. Now there are no males, parthenogenesis is the general law. You observe this method of reproduction from one parent only in the bees, ants, and other insects. Your scientists have caused frogs' eggs to develop without fertilization. When we discovered that the males were unnecessary they gradually died out. None have been born now for thousands of years. The last one survived for seven hundred years, but as his brain development was very low, he was forbidden to materialize. In the end he and another broke this rule of the Supreme Eugenic Committee—and they were eliminated."

Doctor Joyce shivered and scribbled on his pad, "Eliminated like the piece out of my veranda post?" She wrote, "Yes," and touched her metal studded finger tip in a way that showed the doctor that justice was not tempered with mercy on the planet Venus.

Suddenly she got up, looked agitatedly at the lawn where the rays were no longer shining. The doctor joined her, and saw a small cloud obscuring part of the sky. She raised her right hand and pointed toward the little cloud. Spurts of violet flame shot into the sky, and the cloud was gone without trace. Again the faint rays touched the lawn. This time she actually smiled as she touched her forehead, and melted into those rays that carried her millions of times faster than light to her own abode.

EVERYONE was talking of the wonderful discoveries of the young scientist, Dr. Joyce, in the field of chemistry and electricity. He had shown that vitamins were just at the margin of the science of proper dieting. His new microscope combining ultraviolet and mercury vapor light, and focusing at the point of sychronism made visible objects a hundred times smaller than the filterable viruses of the Gye-Barnard experiments. This discovery alone far exceeded the super-microscopes of the day. Electricity waves could now be seen so that complete control was no longer a matter of calculation and guess work based on past experience.

"Such a pity that so promising a young man dabbles in spiritualism," confided the wife of a professor of engineering.

"No, you don't mean to say he could be fooled by any such trickery!" murmured the other lady.

"Well, it was this way, but you mustn't tell a soul; my husband went to see him one night, and found him conversing with a ghost on the veranda. When my husband asked him if he was a spiritualist, he said he kept an open mind on the subject."

"How very thrilling."

"Not a bit thrilling, my dear. My husband made inquiries and found that a little boy in the house opposite was having a party, and had a magic lantern entertainment upstairs. Of course, it must have shone out of the window and into Doctor Joyce's veranda. How very simple these clever men are about little things like that."

Doctor Joyce heard the rumor, and was very well pleased, for one story was as good as another, and it was inevitable that his visitor should be seen occasionally, now that she was coming so often.

For several weeks now Doctor Joyce had been feverishly active; he would see no visitors on any pretext whatever. He refused important gatherings where he was expected to give an account of his wonderful discoveries. His interests seemed very diversified; he had been in communication with several of the leading bee-keepers of the country and had arranged to pay one hundred dollars for two ounces of honey gathered under special conditions that he should specify. A great firm of silversmiths was making a miniature set of furniture on a scale of one to thirty-five. Linen and silk merchants were sending samples of their finest material. A tiny amplifying set had been constructed in which the sound collector was to be the trumpet of a living flower—a columbine—with the five spikes, or nectaries, leading to five different transmitters.

A beautiful little glass cabinet contained these things. Filtered and warmed air was admitted by automatic valves and regulators.

At last came the evening that was to be the crowning glory of all his preparations.

The night shone fine and clear as the doctor waited. In the distance some one sang:

"Oh, star of love whose tender beam
Shines on my spirit's troubled dream."

Then came the faint blue rays and the familiar form taking shape. This time she had something with her, a large, square thing of the same white ivory-like material. He led the way into the library. There on the polished mahogany table stood the cabinet. She inspected it carefully, and motioned him to open the door. Then unfolding her insulating sheet upon the table she stepped lightly up, and placed the square, white box in the center. Slipping off her sandals she placed one bare foot on each of two metal studs in the cover of the box, at the same time touching her forehead. Immediately she began to shrink until she was just about two inches high. The box was now about as big as a sugar lump. The doctor felt a curious thrill as he saw her materialize. She took up her tiny box, and carried it into the cabinet, returning for her insulating sheet.

Now that she was really flesh and blood he felt a new interest and he longed to hear her voice, but she was busy arranging the furniture on the insulating sheet. He helped her, for it was too heavy for her to handle without great exertion.

"Speak to me," he murmured, switching on the amplifier.

"I am tired and hungry," the little voice replied.

HE directed her to the miniature silver salvers and she helped herself to some honey and fruit. The doctor adjusted the receivers on his head and tried the different degrees of amplification. Now her voice sounded rich and clear, although her phonic pronunciation made it difficult for him at times. Presently she sang in her own language and it sounded like the old love dirges that he had heard his mother sing when he was a child. He felt drawn toward this little creature; it was no longer her scientific knowledge that appealed to him. Just to have her near with her earthly feelings of tiredness and hunger would satisfy all the desires of his life.

"I must sleep now," she said. "When I awake I will show you how to dematerialize, and if you like, materialize again as small as I am now."

Going to her ivory box she pulled up a telescopic pedestal until it stood an inch and a half high. Then waving good-night she turned a sunken switch and from the pedestal a dome-shaped fountain of blue flame shot up and curved over until it touched the insulating sheet spread like a carpet beneath box and furniture. The fountain of flame hid everything beneath it so that he could no longer watch her movements. Taking up a metal paper knife, he touched the dome of flame and saw the blade disappear like solder in an oxyacetyline torch. Glass, ivory, carbon and even asbestos disappeared before that deadly destroyer. Idly he took up a flashlight and turned its beam on the dome of fire. To his utter astonishment it penetrated the opaque flame and revealed everything beneath. The little creature was there, a perfect image of beauty, under the dome of fire. He sat down in a chair, clutching the flashlight convulsively. His heart raced so that he almost lost consciousness. Little did he realize that the pent-up love of centuries was being unloosed upon him. Without thinking, he kept pressing the button of the flashlight and sending flashes of light about the room. So absorbed had he become that he did not notice the room filling with shadowy forms. They looked at him vengefully and if it had not been for the flickering flashlight, which they did not understand, he would surely have been eliminated from the face of the earth. One of them pointed her finger at the glass cabinet; a little spurt of flame shot out and the cabinet was destroyed as if it had never been, but the little dome of blue flame continued untouched, immune. Then one of the figures, resembling a middle-aged woman, spread an insulating sheet on the table beside the original with its edge overlapping. A companion passed her a square white box, similar to the first, and she stood on it and materialized. Then she pulled up the pedestal and started a dome of flame so near the other that it mingled with it, forming an oval. It was evident that only flame could touch flame. The fire vanished suddenly, revealing the elder of the two little figures holding the younger by the wrist. In a moment both had dematerialized and gone completely, leaving only the original white ivory case standing on the insulating sheet.

Bitterly he reproached himself for not having tried to protect her from her own people. But he felt the uselessness of trying to match his brains against these super-Amazons. Full well he knew that they could have destroyed him in an instant had they wished.

Later the doctor tried to X-ray the little box, but found it perfectly opaque to the very strongest rays capable of penetrating even thin lead and thicker steel. He has not tried to turn on the flame for fear of doing untold damage with a power as yet unknown on earth.

Many, many nights has he waited in vain for the reappearance of his visitor, but doubtless her friends are reminding her that she belongs to the star of dead love and that there must be no retrogression.

THE END.

Discussions

In this department we shall discuss, every month, topics of interest to readers. The editors invite correspondence on all subjects directly or indirectly related to the stories appearing in this magazine. In case a special personal answer is required, a nominal fee of 25c to cover time and postage is required.

THIS UNSCIENTIFIC WORLD OF OURS

Editor, AMAZING STORIES:

I have been buying this magazine for several months and I feel that it fills a most important yet hitherto much neglected channel in current literature. Most of the suggestions I might venture would but repeat those which have already desired, improvements in the journal's physical make-up, a change of title or a subtitle—Futurist Stories, Scientific Imagination Stories, New Science and New Life Stories.

In my opinion most of the stories fail to embrace more than a limited field of scientific progress. Most of the story tellers exercise imagination upon physical or chemical discoveries or inventions. But discovery and invention must in the future touch a wide array of interests which are the especial province of the psychologist, the sociologist, the industrialist, the human engineer. The specialties of these and other scientists offer great realms for the disciplined imagination to work and peer ahead. Of all the 1,740 millions of people now on the earth, some at least students and witnesses of the scientific progress in physics within the past century, comparatively few know the elements of science. Edison truly says that it is untrue to call this a scientific age. The potential scientific capacities of great numbers of Europeans and North Americans have not yet been moved to action. The splendid mental endowments of vast populations in China, India, South America, Africa, have scarcely been touched by science. Yet we possess now a universal and instantaneous system of communication, we have resources which conquer the adversities, diseases and obstructions of climate, It is pure flattery, illusion, unrealistic bias. which assumes, as is so constantly being done, that these powers are rightly and adequately released or effective even in our home environs; urban or rural. Wells consequently has quit the narrow range of physical advance and now looks to parallel progress in mental and social affairs. Let us have some of the benign as well as of the grewsome. Vigor and abandon are not the exclusive qualities of criminals and fools. Grown up minds also let themselves go for happy results.

DANIEL D. MOLONEY,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

[Our correspondent does not know the trouble and time we devoted to the selection of the name AMAZING STORIES. We obtained suggestions from many variously qualified people, scientific and literary, and selected the one you dislike.

We know and sadly realize that the world at large is lacking in scientific knowledge and the work which is requisite to get a comprehensive view of any one branch, not to speak of the other divisions. But our stories are in all of these branches, entomology, paleantology, chemistry, natural history among many while also television, telepathy, psychology and physiology are to be found treated.

Letters such as this are much appreciated and are one of the most agreeable features of our work.—EDITOR.]

Discussions—

RED DUST FUNGI, MR. BURROUGHS AND THE GERMANS

Editor, AMAZING STORIES:

In your February issue, you report a fungus discovered in France that is like the fungus described in the Red Dust story, except that it is smaller, of course. That reminds me that in my native state (Arkansas) I have often seen a similar thing. They spring up there by the thousands, from the size of a marble to the size of a large turnip. Some are round, while others are the shape of a door knob. I don't remember whether or not they burst of their own accord, but I do know that when stepped on or touched, they send up a cloud of dust which is very irritating to the nostrils and lungs. I never heard any scientific name for them. The natives call them *Devil's Snuff Boxes.*

For all I know, they may grow in many states, but I don't remember seeing them anywhere else.

I have been a subscriber to AMAZING STORIES from the first issue, and I shall continue to be as long as I live, unless I outlive the magazine, and that is not probable. The stories by Wells, Verne, Serviss and a few others are not only good science (presenting visions of scientific possibilities or pobabilities), but they are good literature, as well. Some of the others are not great literature, but their science and mechanics seem good.

I note that some of your readers request you to publish some of the Dr. Hackensaw stories. As for myself, I hope you don't. Dr. Hackensaw is about the most overworked fiction character that I know of. He is not content to master any one profession, but his superhuman genius is so limitless that he masters dozens and scores of them and becomes a veritable creating god in each. It is ridiculous.

Moreover, he is a sort of "Foxy Grandpa" scientist and inventor, lacking dignity of expression. His attempts to be humorous are pitiful and childish. But the author's science is good and I always read the stories. It is unfortunate that he lacks literary style. I think he should give up fiction and write his scientific speculations in essay form.

But this is only a minor objection of mine. I have a more serious criticism to offer regarding "The Land That Time Forgot," by Edgar Rice Burroughs. Most of the story is good, in some respects almost as good as Wells' "The Lost World," and the author handles his subject with dignity and clearness.

But, O, how he hates the Germans! It is amazing that a man of his vision and genius should be so narrow in that respect. If the great war were still going on, there might be some excuse for it. But the war has been over for nearly nine years, and I think it is time for the world to forget its war hatreds, "bury the hatchet" and cultivate friendship. There is nothing to be gained by continuing to rub salt into those old wounds. Even the French, who suffered more than any other nation except Belgium, are seemingly becoming reconciled and friendly with Germany, and if the French can lay aside their war-hates, surely we can.

I am neither German nor pro-German. I hated the Kaiser and his regime as much as any other American, and "gave till it hurt" to see them licked.

I have known hundreds of German people, and found most of them to be as kind, honest, generous and honorable as any other people.

During the war, no doubt, they did commit atrocities. But so did the Allies, only we don't hear much about that. Atrocities are to be expected during war time. Else it wouldn't be war. The Germans did sink American ships before we entered the war, but if they sunk a ship and then continued to fire on women and children while they were getting into small boats and after, I never heard of it. And even if reported, war news is often exaggerated for a purpose.

But however that may be, the war is over and it is time to heal old wounds, and it ill-becomes Mr. Burroughs, at this late day, to add fire to the flame of hate with such obviously biased history or fiction.

With best wishes for your splendid magazine, I remain,

M. B. BUTLER,
Taft, Calif.

[The story of "The Red Dust," while very imaginative, has a strong fiber of good natural history, entomological and botanical, woven through it, which adds to its interest and gives it true, scientific value. Its graphic descriptions of the fauna and flora of the strange region are most instructive independent of the vivid interest they impart. Your confirmation is a tribute to the Author's correctness. The Devil's Snuff Box is a fungus, a puff ball of the "Lycoperdaciae" family. The Giant Puff Ball (Calvatia bovista) probably comes as near our red dust fungi as any of the tribe.

THE LAND THAT TIME FORGOT, you observe, is dated as occurring during the World War, and is based on the work of a German submarine, so you must overlook the "atmosphere," as the critics term it.—EDITOR.]

They Laughed When I Sat Down At the Piano But When I Started to Play!—

"Can he really play?" I heard a girl whisper to Arthur, as I sat down at the piano.

"Heavens, no," Arthur exclaimed. "He never played a note in all his life."

Then I gave them the surprise of their lives. I started to play. Instantly a tense silence fell on the guests. I played the first few bars of Liszt's immortal Liebestraume. I heard gasps of amazement. My friends sat breathless—spellbound! I played on.

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As the last notes of the Liebestraume died away, the room resounded with a sudden roar of applause. Everybody was plying me with questions—"Jack! Why didn't you tell us you could play like that?" . . "Where did you learn?" "Who was your teacher?"

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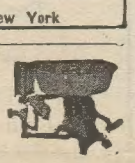

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DRAGGING JULES VERNE OUT OF OBSCURITY

Editor, AMAZING STORIES:

I have been taking AMAZING STORIES since I first discovered it on the market. I must say it is unique in the place it holds in my regard.

"The Second Deluge" is one of the most gripping stories I have ever read. Somehow, in reading of the monster nebula, I came to a greater realization than ever before of what a mote, what an infinitesimal speck, this world of ours is. I have not words to praise this story highly enough. Mr. Serviss almost displaces Kipling as my favorite author.

"The Man Who Could Work Miracles" is my ideal of a humorous scientific tale. But, on the other hand, Clement Fezandié's attempt at humor seems rather forced, although he uses some excellent science. "Blasphemer's Plateau" and "Station X" were *very* interesting. "Beyond the Pole," "The Island of Doctor Moreau," "In the Abyss," and "Moon Metal" were good.

There is only one set of stories that I object to. Such are (exclusive of "A Trip to the Center of the Earth") those tedious and uninteresting narratives by Jules Verne. It seems to me they had better been left in the obscurity from which they were dragged.

I close with "more Serviss."

MANION F. JONES,
Oklahoma City, Okla.

[Again we publish a letter merely to show the apparent discord among readers in regard to some of our stories. In the present case the author evidently does not like Jules Verne's "A Trip to the Center of the Earth," and he goes so far as to call it uninteresting. Against this letter we have dozens who laud this story very highly. The thing has been troubling us a great deal and we have come to the conclusion that to American minds the Jules Verne type of story, or, rather, the treatment thereof, is not as fully appreciated by the present generation as it was when the story first was written. The reason is easy to find. Due to the rush of our present generation, people have no time to read the lengthy stories which were in vogue years ago, and it is to be doubted that Jules Verne himself would have consumed as much space in telling his stories had he lived at the present time. Nevertheless, these stories are classics and we suggest to those readers impatient with the longer narratives that they train themselves to skip over some apparently unimportant pages—a simple way to solve the problem.—EDITOR.]

MORE ABOUT INVISIBILITY

Editor, AMAZING STORIES:

Was a bit surprised to find a rather large scientific "hole" in "The Man Who Could Vanish," by A. Hyatt Verrill. While the story itself showed real writing ability as well as story interest, the means by which Dr. Unsinn managed his disappearance would not, scientifically, be workable.

Quite plainly the explanation is given that the Doctor's little invention merely changed all reflected visible light waves which impinged upon the object to be made invisible to the invisible ends of the spectrum. Consequently the object could not be seen nor its presence be detected by the human eye.

It sounds quite possible and reasonable, but is it? Indeed not. For an object to become invisible it is necessary that the light be in no way deflected by its presence. It must, instead, flow smoothly about it as a brook would flow about a stone, closing completely on all sides.

Should the "invisible" Dr. Unsinn stand, for instance, before an intricate scarlet tapestry he would be plainly visible to an observer who glanced at the hanging. And the reason is that, obviously, all the rays of light reflected from this tapestry would not reach the observer's eye, but would instead be stopped by the Doctor's body and turned back invisible by the machine. Consequently, as there can be no vision without light, a large blank will appear in the fabric on the wall. And also, plainly enough, it will be of the exact outline of the invisible body of the man which stopped the reflected scarlet light waves and prevented their reaching the observer's eye. So the invisible man must remain "visibly invisible" against whatever background he stands before.

In ending let a newsstand subscriber say that AMAZING STORIES is like a keen, clear draft of invigorating literature amongst the ruck of poorly written magazines which seem to be swamping the reading public today. May we not hope that sometime in the future we will find this draft available twice monthly instead of but once. I am quite sure that such an exposure will not cause any of the reading public to catch a literary cold and lose interest. In fact, the result ought to be quite to the contrary.

RICHARD V. HAPPEL,
Pittsfield, Mass.

[This letter is quite interesting in view of other letters on invisibility which we have received, and some of which we have published. Of course the story was entirely fanciful. We suggest that you look in your German dictionary and see what the name of our hero, Dr. Unsinn, means. You will find that the very title of the hero and the perpetrator of invisibility carries out your interesting communication.—EDITOR.]

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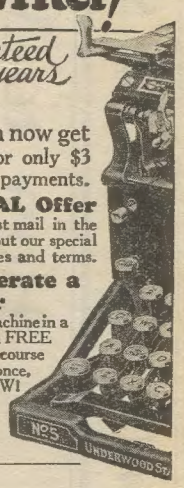

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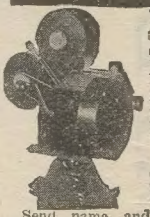

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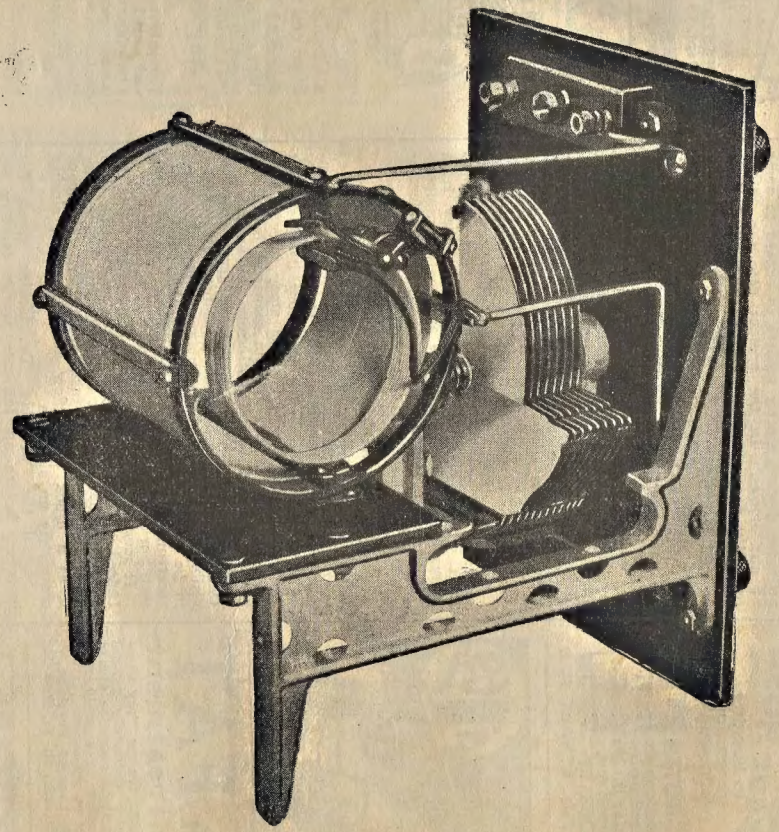

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